



**MEDÉIA  
VERÍSSIMO  
SILVA DE  
ARAUJO**

**“Este foi o melhor hostel em que já estive!” –  
EXPLORANDO A EXPERIÊNCIA EM SERVIÇOS  
NO CONTEXTO DOS HOSTELS**

**“This was the best hostel I've ever stayed at!” -  
EXPLORING SERVICE EXPERIENCE IN THE  
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Tese apresentada à Universidade de Aveiro para cumprimento dos requisitos necessários à obtenção do grau de Doutor em Turismo, realizada sob a orientação científica do Doutor Carlos Manuel Martins da Costa, professor catedrático do Departamento de Economia, Gestão, Engenharia Industrial e Turismo da Universidade de Aveiro



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“Sonho que se sonha só é só um sonho que se sonha só, mas sonho que se sonha junto é realidade.” (R.S.)

Muito obrigada!

## palavras-chave

Turismo, experiência em serviços, hostels, casos de sucesso, métodos mistos

## resumo

Esta tese tem por objetivo explorar o papel da experiência em serviços no contexto dos hostels. Embora o estudo seja fundamentado essencialmente no turismo ele é multidisciplinar, tendo por base também, a gestão da experiência, da hospitalidade e serviços, e o conhecimento do mercado de hostels. Para a fundamentação empírica deste estudo, foram escolhidas duas áreas distintas, nomeadamente Brasil e Portugal, tendo como foco os destinos Rio de Janeiro e Lisboa, por terem hostels reconhecidos e premiados internacionalmente. De modo a atingir os principais objetivos desta investigação, foi conduzida uma estratégia de métodos mistos de pesquisa que consistiu em quatro fases distintas: 1) análise de documentos brasileiros e portugueses tais como relatórios, legislações e base de dados 2) pesquisa de campo etnográfica abordando os casos de sucesso do setor 3) análise netnográfica de comentários online 4) análise quantitativa baseada em questionários aplicados aos hostels e viajantes. Os principais resultados deste estudo contribuem para o conhecimento por: a) trazerem evidências empíricas sobre como o mercado de hostel tem se desenvolvido em contextos tão distintos como Brasil e Portugal, b) identificarem e caracterizarem as práticas dos hostels que são consideradas de sucesso, de acordo com o que os consumidores percebem como uma experiência positiva, c) analisarem os fatores determinantes de uma estadia em hostel d) identificarem as características-chave de uma experiência positiva em hostel e descreverem sua natureza, e) determinarem os elementos num ambiente de hostel que contribuem para melhorar a experiência do consumidor, f) permitirem o desenvolvimento de um modelo de relevância teórica e prática que retrata como a experiência em hostel podem ser melhorada. Tais resultados indicam que a experiência de uma estadia em hostel possui um significado muito mais simbólico do que utilitário, principalmente, no que diz respeito à sua dimensão social. Também vale ressaltar, que alguns hostels têm deixado o estigma da baixa qualidade de lado, redefinindo-se como um tipo de alojamento 'cool' que atende às necessidades mais específicas dos viajantes modernos. Com isso, os hostels têm reescrito o futuro do setor, ao estabelecerem uma nova imagem que condiz com os apelos do turismo contemporâneo, refletindo assim, numa crescente importância deste setor para o turismo. Ainda, considera-se que este estudo fornece informações relevantes tanto para a academia quanto para o mercado, por abordar como a experiência do consumidor em serviços pode ser melhorada. Portanto, o conhecimento gerado através deste estudo traz contribuições teóricas, empíricas e setoriais para o campo do turismo.

**keywords**

Tourism, service experience, hostels, successful cases, mixed-methods

**abstract**

This thesis aims at exploring the role of service experience in the context of hostels. Although the study has its foundations on tourism field, it is also a multidisciplinary study based on a literature review on the management of experiences, hospitality and services and the knowledge of hostel's market. Two distinct areas, Brazil and Portugal, were chosen to fundament the empirical study, with Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro as target as they have achieved top-rated hostels awards. To reach the objectives of the research, a comprehensive mixed methods strategy comprising four main research phases was adopted, consisting of 1) a documental analysis on Brazilian and Portuguese reports, legislation and databases 2) an ethnographic fieldwork addressing the so-called successful cases 3) a netnographic analysis of online reviews and 4) a quantitative exploration based on surveys applied to hostels and travellers. The most significant findings contribute to knowledge by: a) bringing empirical evidence on how hostel market develops in distinctive contexts such as Brazil and Portugal; b) identifying and characterizing successful hostels' practices based on what customers perceive as a positive service experience; c) examining the determinants of a hostel-stay; d) identifying the key features of a positive hostel experience and describe their nature; e) determining the elements on hostels environment that contribute to enhance the customer experience; f) developing a model of enhanced hostel experiences that is of theoretical and practical relevance to contemporary tourism industry. The findings suggest that a hostel experience carries a more symbolic than a utilitarian meaning, especially in relation to its social dimension. Furthermore, they address how some hostels are renouncing a low-quality stigma in order to establish themselves as a 'cool' type of tourist accommodation, as they seem to be outlining the future of the sector by redefining the contemporary hostel's image and attending to modern travellers' more specific needs. Considering the increasing importance that hostels represent to tourism, this study provides information for scholars and industry practioners interested in how service experience can be enhanced. So, the knowledge generated through this study brings theoretical, empirical and sectorial contributions to tourism field.

“A viagem não acaba nunca. Só os viajantes acabam. E mesmo estes podem prolongar-se em memória, em lembrança, em narrativa. Quando o visitante sentou na areia da praia e disse: ‘Não há mais o que ver’, saiba que não era assim. O fim de uma viagem é apenas o começo de outra. É preciso ver o que não foi visto, ver outra vez o que se viu já, ver na primavera o que se viu no verão, ver de dia o que se viu de noite, com o sol onde primeiramente a chuva caía, ver a seara verde, o fruto maduro, a pedra que mudou de lugar, a sombra que aqui não estava. É preciso voltar aos passos que foram dados, para repetir e para traçar caminhos novos ao lado deles. É preciso recomeçar a viagem. Sempre.” *(José Saramago em Viagem a Portugal)*



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## **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

AB Hostels - Associação Brasileira de Hostels e Novas Hospitalidades

AL - Alojamento Local

ALEP - Associação do Alojamento Local em Portugal

BLLA – Boutique & Lifestyle Lodging Association for Hotel Owners

CE - Customer Experience

CEM - Customer Experience Management

D&D - Design and Decoration

EFA - Exploratory Factor Analysis

FIFA - Fédération Internationale de Football Association

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

HE - Hostel Experience

HI - Hostelling International

HOs - Hostellers

HOscars - Hostelworld Oscars

IBGE - Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística

ICT's - Information and Communication Technology

INE - Instituto Nacional de Estatística

KMO - Kaiser-Meyer-Olin

NDS - New Service Development

PHE - Positive Hostel Experience

RNT - Registo Nacional de Turismo

RO - Research Objectives

RTs - Regular Travellers

SB Class - Sistema Brasileiro de Classificação de Meios de Hospedagem

SD - Service Design

SE - Service Experience

SMEs - Small and Medium Enterprises

SPSS - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

St.D - Standard Deviation

UNWTO - World Tourism Organization

VIF - Variance Inflation Factor

WTTC - World Travel and Tourism Council

WYSE TC - World Youth Student and Educational Travel Confederation

# **CHAPTER 1 Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the research project and its importance to tourism practitioners and researchers. It discusses the relevance and rationale for the study with emphasis on the importance of enhancing customer experience on tourism services industry using, in this specific case, hostels as main background theme (section 1.1). Subsequently, the research aim, questions, and objectives of this study are briefly presented (section 1.2) and then the chapter concludes with a description of the structural outline of the thesis (section 1.3).

## **1.1 Relevance and rationale for the study**

Tourism is an essential part of the service industry (Otto & Ritchie's, 1996) and is based on a multiple and diversified set of services englobing transportation, cultural services, recreation, tour operators, food and beverage, accommodation, etc. Nowadays, tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest growing export sectors, contributing to 10% of the global GDP, for one in eleven jobs worldwide and accounting for 30% of world's service exports (UNWTO, 2017a).

If in 1950 there were 25 thousand people travelling, in 2012 the world reached one billion travellers with projection to double this number by 2030 (UNWTO, 2017a). Tourism has changed along with all its production chain. The progress of technology, for instance, has changed the service scenario. Internet nowadays influences the business models, service products, and processes, the globalization of services, the heterogeneity and complexity of the customer's demands in multiple channels and the entry of non-traditional competitors (Roth & Menor, 2003)

The technological revolution together with the increasing of the market competitiveness have forced companies to pursue a constant search for differentiation, leading economy to a process of change. If before companies competed based on their functional attributes, today what sets them apart is not only the functional appeal but above all their power to engage with their consumers. Contemporary companies then, are prospering based on an increasing importance given to customers and competing based on experiential aspects, gearing up the so-called experience economy (Pine and Gilmore, 1999).

This contemporary dynamic comes alongside with the change in the consumers' mind. As for many societies, to pursue mere goods is no longer a distinguishing factor, people are seeking for a sense of uniqueness, of the extraordinary and looking for new directions and more unusual experiences. That in terms of consumption reflects on a search for goods and services that attribute experiential values.

Within that framework, tourism is considered an experiential industry by rigor (Otto and Ritchie, 1996), as tourism businesses hold a great potential to connect with customers through emotional appeals and can go beyond functional and utilitarian attributes (Mossberg, 2007), providing the experiential services that customers crave for. However,

tourism businesses cannot take this experiential value for granted. They cannot be considered immune to fundamental changes in market orientation, instead tourism businesses should know “differentiating solely on traditional elements such as product quality, service quality and price is no longer a sufficient business strategy” (Grønholdt et al, 2015), thus “companies must find new ways to achieve a competitive advantage by focusing on and managing customers’ experience” (Shawn and Ivens, 2005).

Experiences are always individual and unique to every single customer and every single occasion of consumption. It is also a phenomenon that is socially produced and context specific, that is why studying it, should, therefore, capture the complexity of the relationship between individual cognition and context (Gupta and Vajic, 2000). Hence, there is a need for comprehensive and adapted service experiences tools, strategies and management that consider the different and complex context of the contemporary tourism industry (Gupta and Vajic, 2000; Schmitt 2010). An example would be the so-called low-cost services which were responsible for democratized people’s access to travel and for a significant part of the tourism growth. But, even within a segment based on price-orientation, market leads to a sense of differentiation, spurred mainly by tourists seeking to consume at destinations services that provide engaging experiences (Oh et al, 2007).

Hostels are an example, initially created as spaces that used to offer cheap bed bunks for young travelers, they were considered for a long time, a low-budget, low scale lodging. However, this scenario is changing (Papis, 2006), as some hostels are repositioning themselves in the tourism market as a ‘cool’ type of accommodation (e.g. posh hostels, design hostels and eco-hostels) leaving the low-quality stigma behind. Hostels are evolving their concept and diversifying their services and keep increasing their expressiveness in hospitality, as an industry that is currently valued of \$5.2 billion in bed revenue with projection to grow 7-8 percent year-over-year (Hostelworld Group, 2016). But, even with some evidence of the hostel market evolution and its increasing importance to the tourism industry, tourism literature lacks an approach that considers the current market challenges. Thus, this thesis explores the contemporary hostel context under the light of service experience theory.

## **1.2 Research aim, questions, objectives**

Considering the rationale and need for research explained in section 1.1, some research questions stimulate and underpin this thesis, as follows:

- How are experiences influencing tourism industry?
- What is the role of contemporary hostels within the ‘new tourism’ context?
- How to manage service experience in the context of hostels?
- How to improve hostels’ services leading them to customer’s positive experiences?

Consequently, those research questions conducted to the overall research aim of this study:

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***Overall research aim***

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To explore the role of service experience in the context of hostels

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Additionally, the following six research objectives (RO) have been defined as ways to reach the overall research aim and guide all chapters of the thesis, by informing the literature review, methodology, data collection and the findings.

RO1. To bring empirical evidence on how hostel market develops in distinctive contexts such as Brazil and Portugal;

RO2. To identify and characterize successfully hostels' practices based on what customers perceive as a positive service experience;

RO3. To examine the determinants (contextual, psychographics, demographics, etc.) of a hostel-stay;

RO4. To identify the key features of a positive hostel experience and describe their nature;

RO5. To determine the elements on hostels environment that contribute to enhance the customer experience;

RO6. To develop a model of enhanced hostel experiences that is of theoretical and practical relevance to the contemporary tourism industry.

### **1.3 Structural outline of the thesis**

The thesis is divided into three main parts. The first part is composed of three chapters including the introduction, literature review and methodology which provide the theoretical basis of the research. The second part refers to the empirical part of the study including six chapters that discuss the main findings of the thesis. The last part presents and reflects on the main conclusions and implications of the research.

Chapter 1 provides the introduction to the background of the study, addressing its relevance and rationale. The chapter also describes its research aim, research questions, and objectives, furthermore summarizing the structural outline of the thesis.

Chapter 2 expands on the theoretical basis of this study. In this vein, the chapter critically assesses the theory behind the main underpinnings of the study, respectively (1) tourism, (2) services, (3) experiences and (4) hostels, describing their concepts, relations and addressing the most relevant research conducted in those areas that meet this thesis aim.

Chapter 3 underlies the methodological choices taken along the study. The paradigms of the research and strategy are introduced, thus positioning the need of a mix-methods

approach. In sequence, the four phases of the research are described and justified so that their challenges and limitations are to be addressed.

Chapters 4,5,6,7,8 and 9 detail the data analysis processes that address the findings and discussions of the research. Chapter 4 describes the particularities of the hostel market based on evidence from Brazil and Portugal. Chapter 5 examines success cases that allow learning valuable lessons for understanding the service experience phenomenon in hostels. Chapter 6 goes further on travellers' behaviour and intentions, assessing their preferences concerning tourist accommodation, their reasons to stay or not at hostels, exploring whether there are differences among hostellers and regular travellers. Chapter 7 explores the factors contributing to a positive stay at a hostel by electing key items and describing their nature, while Chapter 8 explores the constructs of hostel experience statistically. To sum up, Chapter 9 presents the development process of a model of enhanced-experiences at hostels, resultant from a critical analysis of the literature review together with all previous data analysis and findings chapters.

Chapter 10 summarizes and concludes this thesis. It shows how the research objectives were achieved and addresses the limitations of the study by reflecting on an agenda for future research. Furthermore, it reflects on the contributions of the study in its theoretical, empirical and sectorial implications. In doing so, it demonstrates how this thesis serves as a tool of practical and theoretical relevance for the tourism field because it offers insights and provides an original knowledge contribution, rendering it a work at a doctoral level.

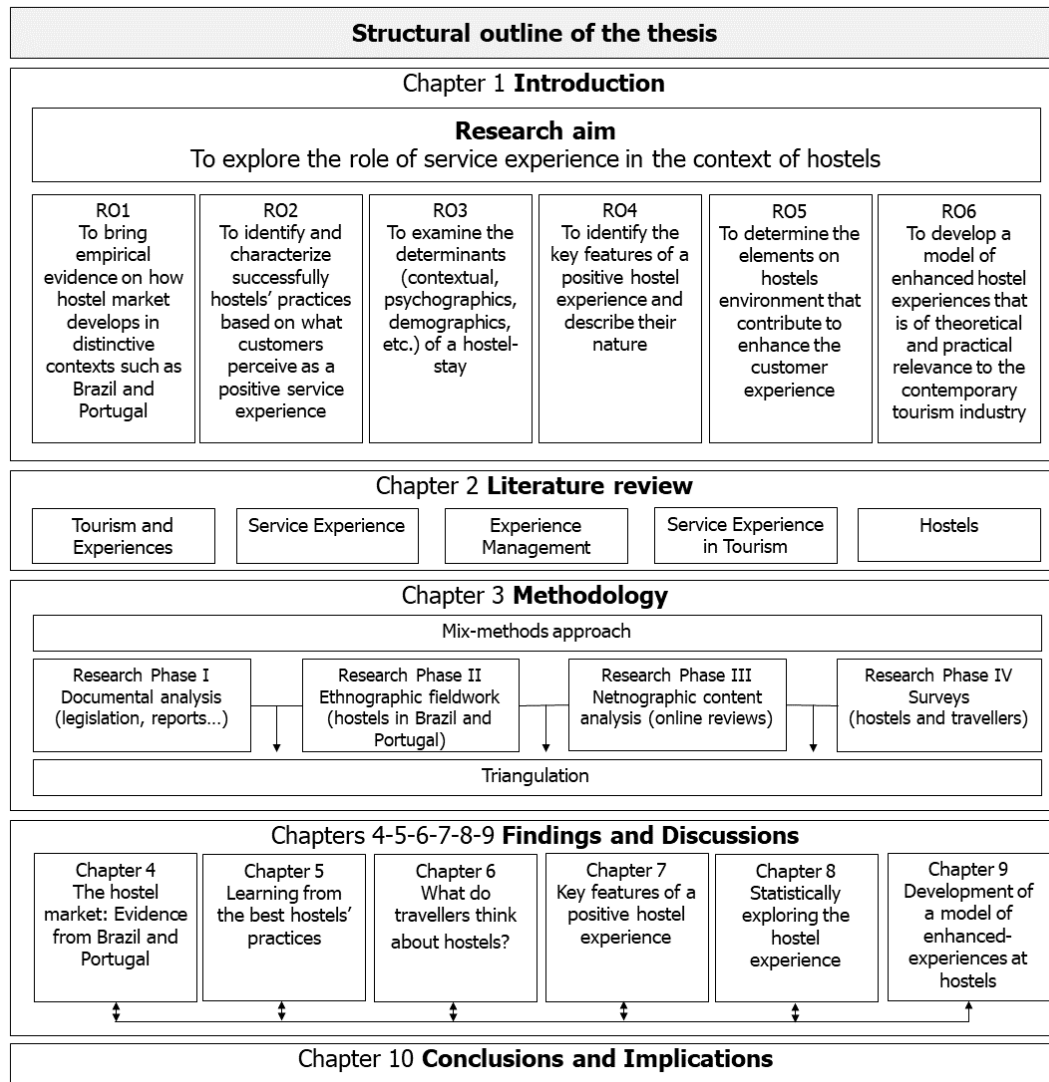


Figure 1 Structural outline of the thesis





## CHAPTER 2 Literature Review

The literature review describes and analyses the four underpinnings of this study, from which 1) tourism; 2) services; and 3) experiences are considered as the main disciplines which englobe the object of the study 4) hostels.

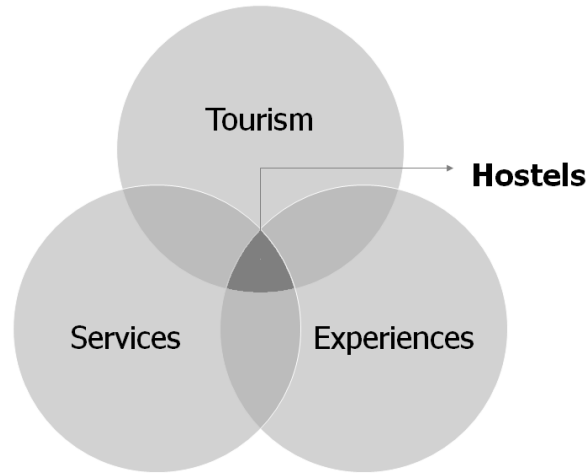


Figure 2 Literature review underpinnings

The literature review begins by establishing the relations between tourism and experiences (section 2.1), briefly narrating the historical facts attributed to the different motives of travelling from ancient to contemporary times. This is followed by a description of the personal and inner aspects of travelling considered in the academic literature. It also takes an interdisciplinary approach and identifies the concepts of tourist experience to critically analyse their nature and complexity, offering a compilation of the main aspects adopted in this study.

In the second part (section 2.2), the literature review examines the service experience concept incorporated within new service-dominant logic and experience economy discourses. Moreover, it explores the main concepts attributed to both domains, namely the differences and similarities between experiences and quality, the distinction between the core and supplementary services; the experience-centric services, and finally the definitions of service encounter, touchpoints and servicescape. The third section (2.3) approaches the need for an experience management, describing the experiential theory development and the outspread of the main concepts, authors, and theories.

This lead over to the fourth stream of the literature review, the service experience in tourism (section 2.4), which explores the empirical and theoretical service experience research applied to the tourism field. It further discusses the main inputs, dimensions, and outcomes of customer experience, as well as identifies some main models and key features of tourism services that can be useful to enhance the tourist-experience. The last section (2.5) presents a literature overview of the object of the study, hostels, explaining their history, their attributes, their market relevance and exploring their demand.

## 2.1 Tourism and Experiences

As the experience economy gears up, people look in new and different directions for more unusual experiences. Tourism, in this context, establishes as an experiential industry by core, once tourists also seek to consume goods and/or service that provides to them engaging experiences (Oh et al, 2007). However, even before tourists and the tourism phenomenon as 'we know' existed, history facts showed that the act of travelling was then related with experiential, personal and communal aspects.

This section addresses a brief history of tourism development, exploring the inner aspects of travelling. Moreover, it explores how it has been possible for tourism experiences to carry within, simultaneously, a subjective/individual discourse along with a pro-business discourse. The section ends by discussing the multidisciplinary concept of tourist experiences centring in its economic-management approach.

### *2.1.2 A brief history of travellers, tourists and the 'new tourists'*

In mythic times, great adventures happened in the form of journeys that used to change traveller's lives and to have an impact in communities' history. Princes, priests, warriors, merchants and explorers were forged over travel. Trigo (2013) mentions that the first formal journey was reported in Babylonia, in the myths of Gilgamesh (1900a.C). At that time, along the journey, the young king learned how to transform from a predator to a protector of his own people.

Accordingly, in Western legends, Greeks were the first people to narrate the wonders of a journey. They were moments of internalization, formation, and transformation where humans used to discover themselves. In sum, the epic journeys were everything that contemporary tourists keep searching for in the act of travelling. Kotler (1998, in Trigo, 2013) adds that the most narrated and famous myths were the ones that in the course of history were highlighted as transformational journeys, a "trip" that could save not only a community but the world and above all, themselves. Curiously, history shows that even before psychotherapy, travel was known as a tool to self-development.

In ancient Greek World, few men and just the free ones used to travel, not always by option. The philosophers did not use to travel, instead, most of the journeys were made by merchants, sailors, and militaries. However, all the documents and artefacts discovered by those men were used by the 'wise' ones with the purpose of understanding the world. It was also in Greek society that what is considered the first travel guide emerged, written by Pausanias of Lydia (actual Turkey) in the year 150 (Trigo, 2013).

In the Jewish World, the legacy of journeys is documented in the Genesis book, in the bible, narrating the history of many Jewish characters. They were men who crossed deserts, faced dangers and encountered distant lands experiencing adventures in pursuit of what they considered as the 'The Holyland'. In more recent narrations, for instance, in the New Testament, there is the story of Paul, a man who travelled across three

regions (Asia, Middle East and Europe) aiming to spread Christianity. A journey that had both a personal spiritual side and the purpose to find sustainability for his community.

Trigo (2013) described that journey as part of human life is found within many religions. For instance, for Chinese, *tao* means the passage to the universe, while in ancient India, *marga* means the way of cure represented in a journey of creation, knowledge and spiritual – physical exercises (*yoga-marga*). In sum, in different periods of history and for several civilizations in the Antique World, going on journeys as a means of discovery, knowledge, and improvement of 'oneself'.

Another historic mark for travel was the development of mobility and transportation. For instance, when the Romanic Empire presented roads to the world, the Navigation Era changed the World map configuration and the western Europe along with their colonial and imperial 'conquers', collected chronic, maps, journals and literary accounts of travel to distant lands. All those episodes shaped travel in the memorial heritage of humanity (Trigo, 2013).

In the Modern Era, the Grand Tour Victorian period (XVII and XVIII) was the turnover of travelling. At that time, young men went into journeys searching for adventures and to experience the exotic and unknown in distant and non-conventional lands. These journeys were considered as a stage of formal education giving young men the opportunity to increment their sophistication and social abilities. Afterwards, in the nineteenth century, there was a 'wave' of migrations in which young men searched for work increased mobility. This period represented a ritual of separation of young men from their home and families, a process that also offered opportunities to tours, adventure and education (Trigo, 2013).

It is not possible to precise weather journeys turn into tours and travellers become tourists but the fact is that the ancient act of travelling, progressively turned into the industry of tourism, supported by businesses and their consumers. According to Walton (2009) it was in the 1960's that tourism 'as we know' increased, delineating the shapes of contemporary tourism industry face. In that period, the globalization and massification of tourism were pronounced, with organized trips and the development of resorts. Tourism was associated mainly to moments of leisure or holidays, gaining importance for its economic value.

Since then, travelling became so popular that nowadays one of the main contemporary tourism issues is its commoditization. For instance, some authors distinguish between the massive versus alternative tourism, positioning the activity into the dual discourse of 'good versus bad' tourism (Honey, 1998; Wood and House, 1991, Zurick, 1995 in Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003). Under this perspective, some authors assume that mass and alternative tourists differ not only in their behavioural patterns but also in the underlying motivations impelling them to travel (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003), while others sustain the distinction between travellers and tourists, considering that the travellers presuppose the negation of mass tourism.

One of the pioneers of the term 'traveller' was the American novelist Paul Theroux who explains this distinguished mode of travelling in his book "The pillars of Hercules" (1995). According to Theroux (1995) travellers sense the external world by relying heavily on the literary texts and other travellers' accounts, rather than on tour operators and advertising discourse. In his perspective, travellers focus upon the gaze instead of relying on postmodern media, like television and the Internet. Thus, travellers generate new images, which are added to the repertoire of signs that tourists consume.

Under a more marketplace overview, Kontogeorgopoulos (2003) states that aside from differing degrees of contact with the global packaged tourism industry (accommodations, length of trip, or nature of holiday) one important measure of differentiation between tourists is that they have divergent degrees of concern for experiencing 'genuine' cultural interactions involving authenticity. As for Kontogeorgopoulos there is a continuum between non-massive tourists, more related with a subjective concern for achieving authenticity rather than any measurable objective achievement.

Poon (1994) considers that the opposite way of commoditized offering and massive tourism personifies in the 'new tourist', which is someone who wants to have memorable, meaningful and enrich experiences for life through tourism consumption. According to Poon (1994) after the standardized mass tourism of the 1960s and 1970s, a 'new tourism' emerged driven by advances in technology, greater sensitivity in consumer tastes and industry deregulation and concentration. That shift of paradigms brought what was considered to tourism as the future of the industry, or the 'new tourism Era', characterized by flexibility, segmentation, customer empowerment and a search for more 'authentic' tourism experiences.

Cohen (2010) adds to the discussion that for many people travelling in leisure time, in fixed breakdowns or vacation, is not enough anymore. Because there are the travellers who carry travel as a lifestyle, as lifelong wanderers, contemporary drifters or lifestyle travellers, for those travel exceeds the importance of mere leisure and becomes a way of life.

Summarizing, travelling is gaining increasingly space in people's lives. Travellers or tourists, engaged in massive or alternative tourism, new travellers are constantly disrupting concepts and redefining the contemporary tourism industry. Thus, this work aligns with the understanding that there is a new tourist/traveller who consider travel as an essential part of their life.

### *2.1.2 The inner aspects of travelling*

History shows that from the primary concepts of journeys to contemporary tourism, travelling had the power to make a social impact either in communal dimension or in personal aspects. If in ancient societies, travellers went in journeys for multiple purposes, as searching for knowledge, adventure and the improvement of

oneself, nowadays the reasons are similar but connected to the appeals of the post-modern society.

White & White (2004) states that for some people **travel could be an experience of transition**, as travelling can act as the occupation of a neutral space sandwiched between a voluntary or imposed ending and a new beginning. The authors explain that the idea of the transitional zone derives from the notion of living on the edge, a state of being between successively participations in a social milieu. That is an experience of being "between" is a "rite of passage", a transition rite that accompanies every change of state, social position or particular points in the life cycle. Turner (1976 in White & White, 2004) explains the experience of transition in three phases:

First, the individual is in a phase of detachment from either a position in the social structure or from an established set of cultural conditions. Then, the individual becomes a passenger who is neither here nor there; the person is in an outsider state due to a temporary situation. Finally, the passage is consummated, and the person re-enters the social structure but changed, with a different view of the world.

This decision to start a journey as a ritual of transition, could have many reasons (e.g. change in family or work circumstances) but always related to a need for change. During the travel journey, the traveller feels a sensation of freedom from social pressures and an openness to relationships with fellow travellers, where travellers can engage socially and share travel experiences. This sensation is described in White & White (2004) research as a feeling of **new beginning**.

From the manner how people experience the world by travelling, to the social development of personhood at specific geo-historical places and moments, tourism can be a changing experience (Urry, 1995). Noy (2004) in the paper "This trip really changed me" describes **the power of a trip as a self-changing factor**. The author explains that profound change can occur during the journey, as travellers usually use as examples statements like "you know who you are", "you learned a lot of things", "change attitude towards life" or "get self-confidence".

The interlocking dimensions of time and space make the journey into a potent metaphor that symbolizes the simultaneous **discovery of the self and the other**. While travellers look into the other's world they find means to claim their own reality (Galani- Moutafi, 2000). Cohen (2010) adds that for people who carry travel as a lifestyle, travel can be a way to search and discovery of self. According to Cohen's research travelling can be an opportunity to learn about the self, because through daily experience of travel one gets to know more about oneself. In addition, travelling is an experience of finding one's self and performing selves, because while travelling is it possible to increase the potential to perform across different contexts, rather than in daily life.

Desforges (2000) believes that **tourism is also a question of self-identity**. The author concluded that self-identity of tourists supports the understanding about

motivation, practices, destination choice, politics of tourism, etc., summarizing a better understanding of tourism consumption. Talking about tourists' self-identity means attempting to understand their desires and in particular, the investments made in travel, and how these practices interconnects these practices with other aspects of their lives. It also means connecting desires to their spatial imagination. In this mode, one can imagine travel as providing for the accumulation of experience, used to re-narrate and represent self-identity.

**Travelling can also reinforce and create new identities** (Urry, 1995), and tourism as a way of consumption construct a more fluid, flexible and constructive conceptualization (Desforges, 2000). Munt (1994 in Desforges, 2000, p.928) describes how middle-class shape their identity through tourism, for instance, by making 'alternative' Third World destinations increasingly popular. They see those destinations as being "places where people can find individual achievement, a strength of character, adaptability, and worldliness can be performed and narrated" and search for them as a form to escape from massive tourism and accumulate cultural capital to asserting their identity. Urry (1995) gives the example of how travel contributed to a construction of a 'new European' identity, as in the author's perspective, travel is a key element to increase short-term mobility turning familiar neighboring countries and articulating a common notion of citizenship.

Tourism studies have addressed the general theme of personhood as a tool in understanding tourism consumption (Cohen, 2010), and as shows in the previous studies, there are several inner aspects that link to tourism. To sum up, travelling is experienced differently by each person, generating subjective and non-transferable meanings, purposes and perceptions. But, under the marketplace analysis, tourism is an experience to be consumed. Hence, what is tourism experience? What influences it? Is it important to businesses? And if yes, how to manage experiences to have a positive impact on tourists? Those are some points that will be approached in the following items.

### *2.1.3 What is experience and tourism experience?*

The term experience derivates from Latin, *experientia* which can be explained by a sort of meanings, as the practical contact with and observation of facts or events (Oxford dictionary, 2014), or the process of getting knowledge or skill from doing, seeing, or feeling things (Cambridge dictionary, 2014).

Experiences have been analysed under several disciplines, from different perspectives, having also different meanings. Carù & Cova (2003 a) explains that experience is characterized by the gaining of knowledge that a person has during everyday life but they can diverge in concept depending on the subject area (table 1). For instance, for hard sciences, an experience is related to experiments based on objective facts and data. For philosophy, it is related with how experience transforms the individual; as for sociology and psychology, it is related with subjective and cognitive facts that will emerge into multiple experiences, important for the construction of the individual. For

anthropology and ethnology, it is the way of how individuals live their own culture and how these events are interpreted by individuals to construct society.

Table 1 Experience approaches by disciplines

<i><b>Experience Approach</b></i>	<i><b>Related with</b></i>
'Hard' Sciences	Objective facts
Philosophy	Transformation of individual
Sociology/Psychology	Subjective and cognitive facts
Anthropology/Ethnology	How individuals live their culture

Source: Adapted from Carù & Cova (2003a)

Tynan & McKechnie (2009) refer experience as both, a noun and a verb, described as "the affect or way in which an object, thought or emotion is felt through the senses or the mind and even the outcome of an experience by way of a skill or learning" (p.503). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), explain that individuals not only receive experiences in a multisensory mode, but they also respond and react to them and therefore place interaction at the heart of the experience.

Experiences as a concept is intrinsically related with the inner aspects of human behaviour, and from the 80s it turned into an emergent topic in marketing and business issues (Carù & Cova, 2003 a). Once society is increasingly searching for experiential consumption instead of the functional one, the experience turned into a key concept to understand customers' behaviour and the actual consumer market. As confirmed by Carù & Cova (2003 b, p.5):

"The enjoyment derived from shopping does not come from buying, wanting or desiring products, but that shopping is a socio-economic means to socialize, to enjoy oneself and the company of another person while making given purchases."

The progressive hedonic consumption was assumed in several economic fields, turning consumer behaviour studies less utilitarian, strengthening the emotional and sensorial aspects of consumption. This experiential approach increased as long as experiences turned into a new paradigm in consumer behaviour and management studies.

Under a marketing approach, Holbrook and Hirschmann (1982) were the first researchers to theorize that consumption has experiential aspects. For them, it is necessary to consider the emotional and the irrational side, exploiting the intangible elements connected with emotional values. According to the authors, the experiential aspects of consumption are based on three F's, 'fantasy, feelings and fun', describing the hedonic element.

Although there is an agreement between researchers and practioners of seeing experience as a trend, many authors diverge in approaching experience as a field of study. Carù & Cova (2003 b), for example, explains that researchers are divided into two veins of study: The romantic roots of extraordinary consumption and experience and the disappearance of contemplative time.

Carù & Cova (2003 b) include Schmitt, Holbrook and Campbell, as the authors who discuss the experience in romantic roots, providing an extraordinary experience to the consumer. These romantic roots are based on three main characteristics: surprising the customer (attending to customer necessity of something unexpected beyond all); proposing the extraordinary and stimulating the five senses.

Latin researchers, on the other hand, defend the valorisation of simpler and common experiences. Authors as le Breton and Urbain (in Carù & Cova, 2003 b) defend that contemplative time could also develop consumption experience. According to the authors, simple acts as running and thinking can also be extraordinary. Some characteristics of this approach are: the tendency to saturate every moment with something to do, and, increasingly frequently, to stuff it with several things to do at the same time; and the tendency to do everything at a faster pace to have the possibility (or the illusion) to do more or to live more intensively.

Ahola (2005), however, defines three main lines in the discussion of experience in the consumer context. First, the humanistic frame - where experience is a subjective and inner phenomenon. Second, the extraordinariness frame - where experience is a special and particular phenomenon. And at last, the marketplace frame - where experience is considered as a marketplace phenomenon. From that approach rises the customer experience management as an issue of marketing and business in where researchers try to understand businesses' role in the process of developing the customer experience.

In an approach to the role of time in experiences, Ariely and Carmon (2000) state that experiences can be perceived as continuous or discrete. The evaluation of individual parts of an experience can be done retrospectively, prospectively and in real time. Tynan & McKechnie (2009), in accordance, just emphasize how experience is a consumption process where customers and businesses co-create value along time. Considering there are three stages of holistic customer experience: pre-experience, customer experience and post-experience and in each stage, customers engage differently. Tynan & McKechnie (2009, p.509) state that:

"In the pre-experience stage customers anticipate and prepare for consumption by searching for information, imagining how the experience might be, planning and budgeting for the experience. Whereas at the customer experience and post-experience stages, customers obtain value from both engaging in the experience and from the consumption meanings they co-create."

The experience theory has been also used as a vehicle to describe the meaning of various leisure and tourism activities and events. But still, there is no easy agreement on literature regarding the concept of tourism experiences. As in the example of Carù & Cova (2003 b) and Ahola (2005) papers, Uriely (2005) also reviewed experience, however, under a tourism approach. The author affirms that the first concepts of tourist experience used to emphasize its distinctiveness from everyday life, considering that tourists search in travel what they cannot find in their every-day lives.



Panosso Netto and Gaeta (2010) have a similar perspective by affirming that to be an experience, travel should overcome banality and trivial aspects that most times are conventional and stereotyped. According to the authors, **tourist experience should be based on personal aspects** and should seek for moments and places that increase one's personal history; creation of remarkable experience.

But, Uriely claim this discussion changed after the 90s, as tourism is now seen a post-modern phenomenon within all its complexity. Experiences that once were confined to tourism events turned into possibility in every-day lives, mainly because many tourist-related experiences are reachable without the necessity to travel to further destinations. The author gives some examples when affirming nowadays many leisure activities are possible without travelling too far away. Activities such as trekking, biking, mountaineering can be also considered tourism, while tourists searching for the authentic on rural tourism, heritage tourism, eco-tourism (Rojek 1995; Urry 1990) do not need to be far from their homes to enjoy this type of tourism. Beyond that, the stimulation to create and to attend theme parks and shopping centers (Lash and Urry 1994; Pretes 1995) turned tourist-experiential activities closer to anyone. The concept of 'tourism is everything and everything is tourism' (Munt in Uriely, 2005) increased, difficulting to define experience in tourism context.

Volo's (2009) research evidence that people have a broader understanding of the tourism experience is. When asking tourists to conceive their experiences, Volo's findings showed tourists consider almost every event as an experience. Visiting the place, reading a book to get prior knowledge, eating a gelato, using transportation (supporting experiences) and even seeing the major attraction of the destination (peak experiences) is an experience (as shows table 2):

Table 2 Experience approaches by disciplines

<i><b>Travel Experience synonyms</b></i>
visit activity motivation trip escape behavior emotion perception  event  response to stimulus  consumption  interest  product  observation  service  cognitive or affective process  encounter attraction novelty journey seeing feeling visiting learning  conceptualizing  knowing  reasoning  believing  recognizing

Source: Based on Volo (2009)

The multiple understanding of what is the tourism experience reaffirms their importance to tourism and vice versa. Pine and Gilmore (1999), consider the tourism industry as an experience itself because hospitality, attractions, retail, events, and transportation have in common the fact they exist to provide the customer with experiences. Mossberg (2007) argues that **tourism** could be also called an **experiential industry linked with the creative industries**, as tourism aligns with the creative industries approach where the main task is to create or deliver an experience in some form. Entertainment and cultural industries are examples of creative industries and Mossberg assume that tourism is important for all sectors within the creative industries. For Volo (2009) tourism is essentially a marketplace of experiences and **tourists provide the 'mental places'**

**where the tourist experience happens.** The author adds this environment could also exist also in the virtual world and outside, as nowadays ICT's are an essential part of the new tourist experience.

From the marketing perspective, a **tourist experience is a consumer experience once** the marketing significance of the tourist activity is based on their consumption. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that tourist consumption goes beyond simply material things, as in tourism there are all the emotional aspects involved to understand the entire journey(Mossberg, 2007)

Trigo (2013), highlights the **unique and individual** character of travel experience, as follows:

"Travel is unique because even if you get back to a place you will do it in a different period of time and this factor changes scenarios, people, situations, tendencies and lifestyles. Individual because all the knowledge acquired from oral traditions, books, movies or computer screens just consolidate in our lives when submitted to real experience." (2013, p.31)

the philosopher Alain de Botton in his book 'The art of travel' (2002) gives an example on how personally an experience can be perceive by describing what he called the "pudding arguing". He narrates he and his girlfriend in Barbados, with its bare blond beaches and coconut palms. But then he was surprised to find himself worrying about petty things, when during the dinner, his girlfriend's pudding came in a big portion but with a terrible aesthetical aspect, while his pudding, came in a small portion but in perfect shape conditions. This was a motive to have an argument in a restaurant with his girlfriend about puddings and his whole day was spoilt. He questioned: why in such exotic surrounding should we be assailed by the same old woes? The author reflects on how ignorant we are about the art of travel because even with the travel industry telling us where to go, it does not tell us how to do it. De Botton (2002) concluded then, **one's capacity to extract happiness from material goods depends on a set of emotional and psychological aspects** as "comprehension, love, communication, and respect".

Li (2000) claims **tourist experiences can't be bought**, mainly because experiences took shape in the mind of the tourist and tourist providers can only input the environment. For the author, the tourist is the only actor who holds the power to turn those inputs into experiences. IN a different perspective, Andersson (2007) consider the tourist experience as the moment where tourism consumption and tourism production meet. Which is when the value is created, like rental cars, hotel rooms or music performance have as a final purpose to yield tourism experiences. Alongside this process, the tourist will search for the items they think necessary, thus a hotel room, a train ticket, etc, will only transform into an experience through the tourist own skills.

Summarizing, tourism and experiences concepts are differently approached, as follows (table 3):

Table 3 Consumer/tourist experiences definitions

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Holbrook and Hirschman (1982)	Experiences are "a steady flow of fantasies, feelings, and fun."
Csikszentmihalyi (1990)	Flow is the optimal experience that keeps one motivated. This feeling often involves painful, risky or difficult efforts that stretch the person's capacity as well as an element of novelty and discovery. Flow is an almost effortless yet highly focused state of consciousness and yet the descriptions do not vary much by culture, gender, or age.
Arnould and Price (1993)	Extraordinary experiences are characterized by high levels of emotional intensity and triggered by an unusual event.
Carbone and Haeckel (1994)	The take-away impression formed by people's encounters with products, services and businesses a perception produced when humans consolidate sensory information.
Otto & Ritchie (1996)	Subjective mental state felt by participants during a service encounter.  (it continues)
Pine and Gilmore (1999)	Experiences are events that engage individuals in a personal way.
Schmitt (1999)	Experiences evolve as result of encountering, undergoing, or living through situations. They are triggered stimulations to the senses, the heart and the mind. Experiences also connect the company and the brand to the customer's lifestyle and place individual customer actions and the purchase occasion in a broader social context. In sum, experiences provide sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and relational values that replace functional values.
Gupta and Vajic (2000)	An experience occurs when a customer has any sensation or knowledge acquisition resulting from some level of interaction with different elements of a context created by a service provider.
Shaw and Ivens (2002)	An interaction between an organization and a customer. It is a blend of an organization's physical performance, the senses stimulated and emotions evoked, each intuitively measured against customer experience across all moments of contact.
Berry et al (2002)	The means of orchestrating all the clues that people detect in the buying process.
Gentile et al (2007)	A set of interactions between a customer and a product, a company, or part of its organization, which provoke a reaction. This experience is strictly individual and implies the customer's involvement at different levels (rational, emotional, sensorial, physical and spiritual). Its evaluation depends on the comparison between a customer's expectations and the stimuli coming from the interaction with the company and its offering in correspondence of the different moments of contacts or touch- points.
Oh et al (2007)	From a consumer's perspective, experiences are "enjoyable, engaging, memorable encounters for those consuming these events"
Andersson (2007)	The moment when tourism consumption and tourism production meet. The moment when value is created and resources are consumed.
Mossberg (2007)	An experience is made up inside a person and the outcome depends on how an individual, in a specific mood and state of mind, reacts to the interaction with the staged event

Volo (2009)	Any occurrence that happens to a person outside the “usual environment” and the “contracted time”
Tung and Ritchie (2011)	An individual’s subjective evaluation and undergoing (i.e., affective, cognitive, and behavioural) of events related to his/her tourist activities which begins before (i.e., planning and preparation), during (i.e., at the destination), and after the trip (i.e., recollection).

Even though a definition of experience remains controversial when considering the main concepts of experiences in tourism definitions, they converge in two aspects: **(i) experiences are subjective and are intrinsically related with one’s inner aspects; (ii) experiences are triggered and stimulated in service/consumption encounters.** This research assumes both statements, sustaining and going further on the second as the fundament of the research.

The study assumes that utilitarian and rational information processing schemes which focus on functional or purely attribute-based elements are incommensurate with leisure and tourism. It also aligns with Otto and Ritchie’s (1996) statement that tourism, more than any other service industry, holds the potential to elicit strong emotional and experiential reactions by consumers. Furthermore, it aligns with Tung and Ritchie’s (2011) approach that the central role of tourism planners is to facilitate the development of an environment that enhances the tourism experiences. Thus, to go further on tourism experience is to understand service experience and its management.

## 2.2 Service experience

**Tourism is an essential part of the service industry** as in Otto & Ritchie’s (1996) words “tourism is an amalgam of service industries”. In its multiple and diversified scope of services (transport, F&B, accommodation, etc.), tourism is an industry that shows to know how successfully explore its experiential potential. Moreover, many tourism businesses appeal to the meaningful and transformational aspect that travel carries within, providing the kind of experiential services that customers crave for.

“The experience we have affects who we are, what we can accomplish, and where we are going, and we will increasingly ask companies to stage experiences that change us. Human beings have always sought out new and exciting experiences to learn and grow, develop and improve, mend and reform. But as the world progresses further into the Experience Economy, much that was previously obtained through noneconomic activity will increasingly be found in the domain of commerce. That represents a significant change. It means that what we once sought for free, we now pay a fee.” (Pine & Gilmore, 1999 p.163)

The literature suggests that whatever the service a customer is buying or receiving that customer will have an experience; good, bad or indifferent, or as according to Carbone and Haeckel (1994) a service always comes with an experience. In this vein, this section

clarifies the new service-dominant logic and the experience economy constructs, exploring the main concepts that interconnect both domains in literature.

### *2.2.1 The new service dominant logic and the experience economy*

Services are a series of interactions between participants, processes and physical elements, and different from other sectors, they create value without abandoning materials. Services can therefore continuously create value throughout the entire life cycle of a product (Kimita, Shimomura & Arai, 2009) and have several characteristics: intangibility, inseparability, perishability, and heterogeneity that makes the difference between them and products (Lovelock & Wright, 2002).

A service is not something that is fabricated and stocked to be sold later. Services are singular because of a series of reasons: (1) they are processed at the same time as they are delivered; (2) they are created by who offer and also by whom consumes (co-created); (3) they are a series of moments of truth (encounters), and these encounters are "when the magic happens". Services have also a character of unpredictability because customers, as singular elements, show unpredictable behaviour and sometimes unclear expectations. But the unpredictability element can be positive for the service, once excitement, spontaneity, and authenticity can positively influence the overall experience (Voss, Chris & Chase, 2008).

But is important to clarify that services are also distinct because their unique features influence differently the experience clients have when compared to the experience they have with products. Hermann et al (2000), for instance, consider that consumer quality assessment is based on intrinsic attributes (physical, technical, etc.), while providing value that also depends on extrinsic aspects (immaterial or non-functional), such as the brand name and aesthetics elements. So, an understanding of services' attributes is crucial for businesses to perceive the importance of the usefulness of services and their hedonic aspects.

Moritz (2005) summarizes some crucial characteristics of service thinking, as follows (figure 3):



Figure 3 Unique features of services  
Source: based on Moritz (2005)

**Services are not produced but performed**, as their production and consumption occur at the same time and are made of interactions between businesses and consumers. In addition, a service experience will never be the same, because, for example, a hotel can have the same installations for a long time but every contact with the customer is singular, as they are differently performed. This environment of interactions is a unique characteristic of services but can be hard to control, challenging providers to manage them.

**Services are complex experiences.** Although it happens over the time and it is made up of different contact points, the customer total experience is made of every encounter with a part of the service, that is called touch point. In other words, the overall interface and experience connections is a combination of all the experience touch points. So, there could never be two service experiences alike.

**Services cannot be stored nor owned**, they are intangible and must be used on the spot because lose their value if not used. For example, a hotel room cannot be owned but used, at the same time it cannot be stored to be sold the next day. If not sold on the same day it will have lost its value or capacity to generate a profit for the company.

Representing the largest part of many developed economies, the service industry is taking the lead over traditional industrial sectors worldwide also by taking advantage of the particularities of service attributes. However, as a dominant sector in the 21st century, the industry is also pressured by some contemporary issues, as the globalization process, the information and communication technology and the competition of markets for new offers (Menor et al, 2002). Hence, in times where rapidly market changes are leading the way to competitiveness, new services are required to have fresh perspectives to succeed to the new demands. Under this perspective, the new service development (NDS) emerged, as a strategy for companies to succeed (Menor et al, 2002). The NDS is a change in the existing service system based only in the operational process and participants to a modification, differentiation, market creation, market expansion, market extension or diversification based on a new customer and new service categorization (Tax and Stuart, 1997). The authors refer that new services could result from any change that altered a customer's experience or required different service systems from the organization.

The NDS is interpreted by Pine and Gilmore (1999) as a new paradigm or a new stage of the economy because it reflects on a demand for services with an experiential value. Citing the author's words, nowadays many societies are characterized by a sense of uniqueness where to pursuit common things is not a factor of distinction anymore. So, if in one hand people are seeking for "the extraordinary", on the other hand, technology revolution and the increase of competitiveness of markets pushes companies to a search for differentiation.

Furthermore, Pine and Gilmore describe that societies devote a considerable part of their resources to pursue the good in life, in a constant search for joy, pleasure, and happiness, the experience economy. On the other hand, the authors suggest that to respond to the customer's desires, uprising the so-called experience economy. Within this framework, businesses must invest even more in the customization of services, as customizing a service is a sure route to stage positive experiences. Businesses just should be aware that customization is not the end for all but an important element to create customer-unique value, as the portal through which experiences reach the individual customer.

This dynamic process results on a progressive change of economic values - from commodities to goods, from goods to services, from service to the stage of experiences, that may also upgrade to a stage of transformations (figure 4). Because, while commodities are fungible, goods tangible, services intangible, experiences are memorable. And when the company provides such customer unique-value, it takes an invaluable first step toward creating memorable interactions.

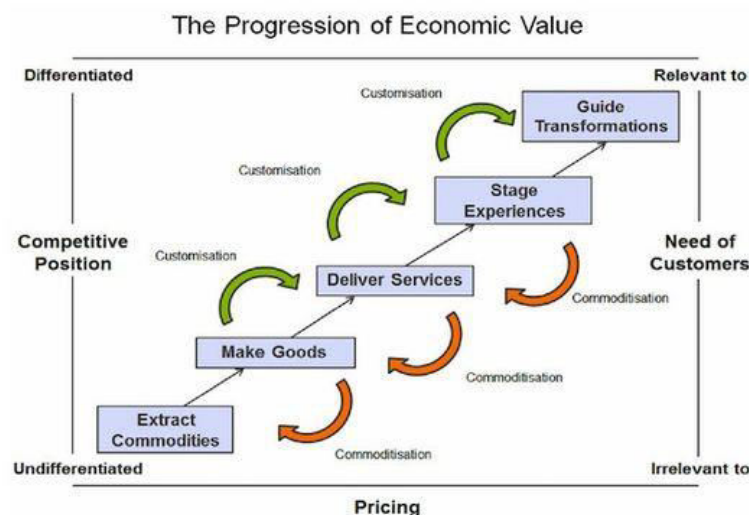


Figure 4 Economic progression of value  
Source: Pine and Gilmore, 1999.

Gupta and Vajic (2000) suggest three dimensions in which **experiences can be characterized and differentiated from products and services**:

1. **The organization influence over the customer's use environment.** For a product, the context where the consumer buys it is very different from the context where it is used. For services the production and consumption happen at the same time, but still provides some capabilities to influence consumers' decision and consumption process. But in experiences, customers are active not passive in creating the environment, in this case providers not merely influence the context but are responsible for facilitating and engaging customers during the use of a service.
2. **Customer participation.** In experiences the customer presence cannot be minimized, in turn, customers must be engaged as much as possible and empowered to be actively participant in the consumption process.

3. **Social interaction.** In the case of experiences, interactions can be an important part of the process because the measure they interact with other customers and employees may be a way for customers to construct their own meaning of context and shape their preferences.

Pine and Gilmore (1999) when describing the experience economy also considered a further level. According to the authors, if companies do not consider the effect that experiences may have on the participants and if they don't manage the experiences in such a way as to create a desired change they may get into the commoditized trap, in which experiences won't be enough for customers:

"But what people really want after they enter into all these pursuits? Experiences, yes. But there is more than that: we want to transform ourselves to become different. While experiences are less transient than services, the individual partaking in the experience often wants something more lasting than a memory, something beyond what any good, service or experience alone can offer." Pine and Gilmore (1999, p.163)

Pine and Gilmore's (1999) 'experience economy was a crucial alert to the market for this continuous changing of economic progress and to the implications to the experiential environment for businesses. However, since then, there was an increase in business awareness about experience and now it can be considered a mega trend, mainly because experiences extended across various industries (Hovedstadens Udviklingsråd, 2005 in Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2011). Yet, from all industries, services seem to carry out the experiential flag within, especially because they have the potential to trigger customers' emotions.

### *2.2.2 Key concepts of the service experience*

Service experience is considered the total sum of the functional and emotional outcome dimensions of any kind of service. Chen and Chen (2010) defines it as the subjective personal reactions and feelings that are felt by consumers when consuming or using a service. In sum, it is always individual and unique to every single customer and every single occasion of consumption. Beyond that, it assumes that the customer is an active co-creating part of the service consumption process (Sandström et al, 2008). But, service experience carries within other concepts crucial to its understanding, as following further below.

#### **2.2.2.1 Experience vs. quality**

Most of the services recognize the importance of the experience and use it to differentiate and position themselves in the market. Pullman & Gross (2004) confirm that there is an increasing interest and desire of service companies in creating experiences for customers and an intent of researchers in discussing this issue, even though by different names, such as (p.1): "attention economy (Davenport & Beck, 2002), entertainment economy (Wolf, 1999), a dream society (Jensen, 1999), emotion economy



(Gobé & Zyman, 2001), economy of affection (Hyden, 1980) or an experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, 1999; Schmitt, 1999).

But in times where the term experience is hackneyed, it is necessary to distinguish the perceptions in terms of service management. For example, the customer perception of quality and satisfaction with experience is commonly misunderstood (figure 5). The point is that for some authors when the customer interacts with the firm positively, the customer satisfaction is expected, but when this satisfaction transcends the perception of quality, it happens the service experience. However, for other authors, any experience is considered a service experience. Crick and Spencer (2011) explain that in hospitality operations, as in other services, the expectations and perceptions of the customer are heightened because the customer is involved in the performance of the service.

Zeithaml (1988) states that quality perception is linked to the purchase and consumption experience and is defined as a consumer's global judgment in relation to the product fitness for its intended purpose. The concept of quality is intrinsically related with consumer satisfaction that is generally construed to be a post-consumption evaluation, dependent on perceived quality or value, expectations and confirmation/disconfirmation of any discrepancy between actual and expected quality (Anderson, 1994). An experience occurs when a customer has any sensation or acquires knowledge from some level of interaction with the elements of a context created by a service provider (Pullman and Gross, 2004).



Figure 5 Service quality vs service experience

Source: based on Zeithaml (1988), Anderson, (1994), Pullman and Gross (2004) and Dixon & Verma (2013).

In tourism and hospitality, both concepts quality and experience are difficult to set apart. Otto and Ritchie's (1995) suggest that the perceptions of services' quality are correlated with the level of satisfaction from an experience. For the authors, customers can distinguish functional quality from the quality of the experience. However, most of the instruments have been developed for the measurement of quality of service which many times are not appropriate to measure the affective components of a service experience.

Ladhari's (2000) research, in addition, show that in hotels' services, service quality is positively related to consumers' emotions and the emotional satisfaction of guests along with service quality impact positively on behavioural intentions of guests. Thus, organisations should focus on more than cognitive satisfaction and pay attention to the emotional aspect of satisfaction because the perception of quality does not just occur cognitively but also has an affective or emotional aspect (Ladhari,2000).

Dixon & Verma (2013) consider that behavioural researchers usually use the term experience referring to anything that provokes a physiological or emotional response. Moreover, if considering that the new understanding of hospitality industry is 'behaviour and experiences' (Hemmington, 2007) and that hospitality carries within a hedonic consumption (Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Miao, Lehto and Wei, 2014), it can be considered that a referral to the hospitality services' experience could be either referral to the quality of their experiences.

#### 2.2.2.2 Experience-centric services

The experience - centric paradigm suggests evoking customer emotions and engaging customers in memorable and meaningful ways are central to the service offering, hence, the experienced-based encounter could enhance customer value which will be rentable for the businesses. (Voss, Roth & Chase, 2008).

Zomerdijk & Voss (2009) defines experience- centric services organizations as the ones which consider customer experience as the core of their offering. Thus, to create customer value proposition, it is necessary to sum the value of experience, the service attributes, and the price, considering that in the experience-centric services the experiential aspects will be more valuable. This applicability in parts of the service process is not new, however, delineating experience-centric strategies is. Therefore, to create and deliver experience-centric services the integration of customer experience in the operating and delivery system is necessary (Voss, Roth & Chase,2008).

Voss, Roth & Chase (2008) add that when a company crafts the customer experience proactively to create a distinctive product and service offering, they are considered experience- centric services. However, there are different business strategies, as some use experience in tactical and functional terms and others as part of the strategic core. Vacation lodges, theme parks, and other touristic services due to its high experiential appeal positions in this second group (experience as a core strategy).

Focusing on customer experience and experience design is fetching a greater importance for service management. Roth & Menor (2003) explain, in their research agenda for services issues, that services management paradigms are based on a triad of pillars (figure 6), crucial for the whole management process.

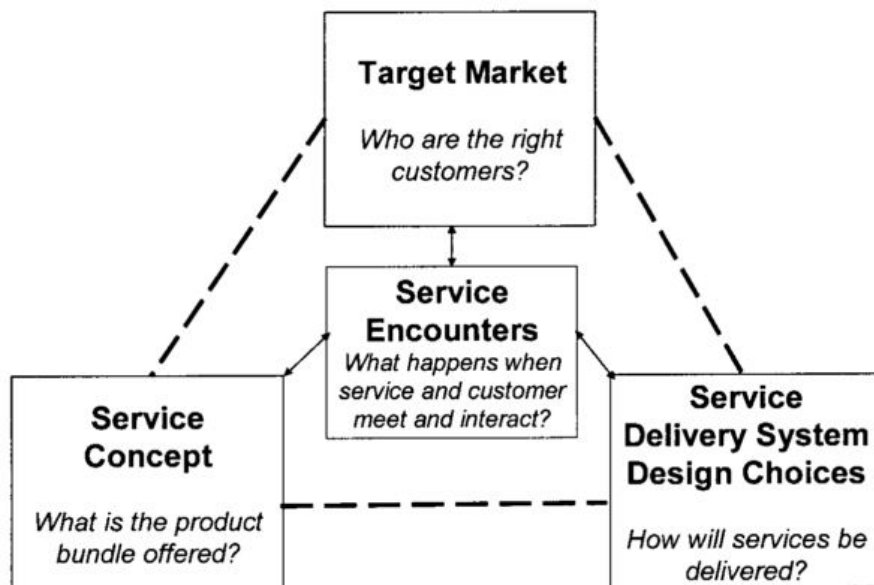


Figure 6 The service strategy triad  
Source: (Roth & Menor, 2003)

**The Target** (who are the right customers?) - Traditionally the target is the finding of "right" customers, based on common attributes and characteristics.

**Service concept** (What is the product bundle offered?) - The first step for service design is to perceive the concept of service offering

**Service Delivery System Design Choices** (How will services be delivered?) - That is the architectural process in service system offering.

**Service Encounters** (What happens when service and customer meet and interact?)  
- All the elements of the triad influence the service encounters, once the encounter are the contact points or "moments of truth".

The service triad is based on a traditional service dynamic, but within the new paradigm of experience - centric services, the experiential aspect must be in accordance with the whole process. In this mode, Roth & Menor (2003) suggest some questions that experience- centric firms must reformulate in order to put experiences in the core of their strategy (figure 7):

The target (**Who are the experience seekers?**) – target the customers based on what kind of experience they are looking for.

Service concept **(What are the experiences offered?)** – Service also should be tough in the perspective of what particular characteristics service have, to develop an experiential approach with the customer.

Service Design Choices **(How experience will be designed?)** – The process required to develop an experiential service design.

Encounters **(What happens when service and customers co-create experiences?)** – The moments of truth are also the moments of magic and is where all the elements converge for the experience to happen.

Service Design Choices **(How experience will be designed?)** – The process required to develop an experiential service design.

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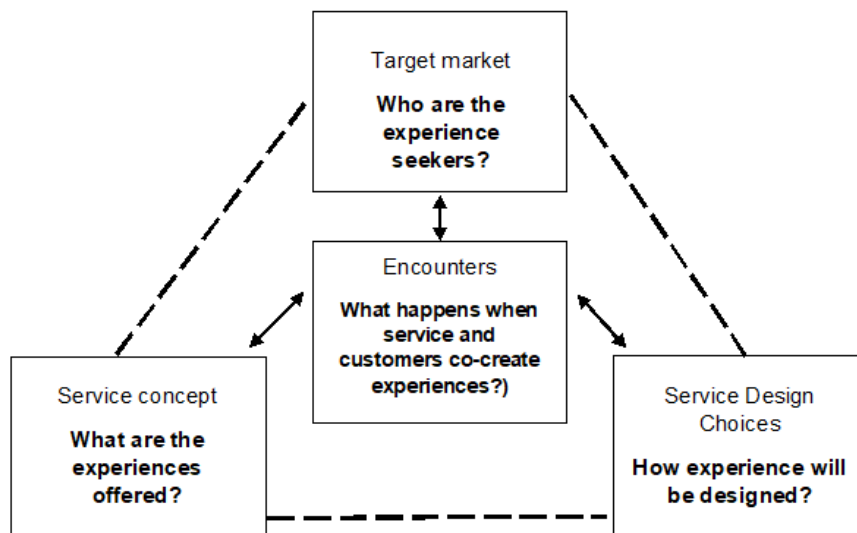


Figure 7 Experience-centric service strategy triad  
Source: based on (Roth & Menor, 2003)

Also, the role of the service design emerges from the relationship between experiences and services, underpinned on the fact that to offer experience-centric services it is necessary to manage the design of customer experiences by planning tangible and intangible elements on services (Pullman & Gross, 2004). So, service design is identified by some authors as a gap in the service literature research as a scarcely studied issue (Menor et al, 2002; Tax & Stuart, 1997). The experiential management is further discussed in section 2.3.

### 2.2.2.3 Core and supplementary services

By concept, services are made of a core element addressing the customer's need for a basic benefit together with supplementary elements that facilitate and enhance the use of the core service. Lovelock & Wright (2002, p.29) explain that 'many service products comprise a bundle that includes a variety of service elements and even some physical goods'. For this, it is important to distinguish between the core product that the customer buys and the set of supplementary services that often accompany that product.

Lynn Shostack was one precursor of this concept when in 1977 she created a framework that uses a chemical analogy to describe the structure of service offerings. In that model the author explains that products augment their value, while at the centre is the core benefit that addresses the basic customer need, with links to a series of other service characteristics ( figure 8):

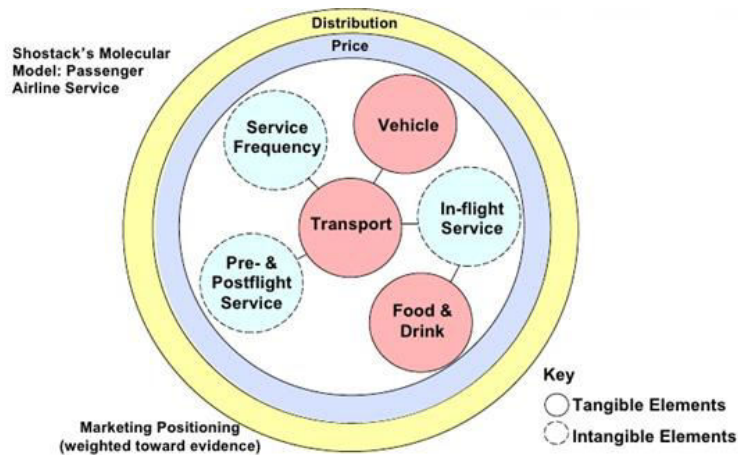


Figure 8 Shostack's molecular model

Source: based on Shostack (1977)

In a similar vein, Lovelock (1996) designed the flower of service (see figure 9) that brought to service literature the distinction between core and supplementary services. It can be described as a visual framework for understanding the supplementary service elements that surround and add value to the product core. The author highlights that there are dozens of different supplementary services, but at least one of the eight clusters (information, consultation, order taking, hospitality, caretaking, exceptions, billing, and payment) is transversal to many services.

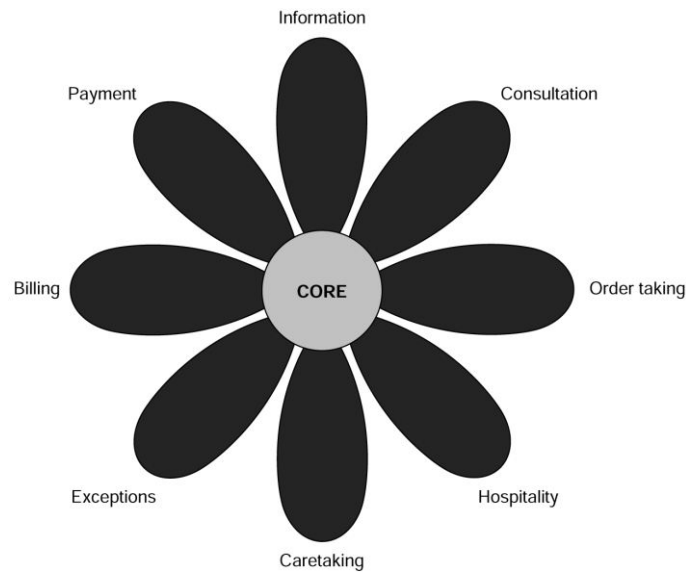


Figure 9 Flower of service  
Source: Based on Lovelock (1996)

According to Lovelock & Wright (2002) most of the supplementary services should represent responses to customer needs and can enhance the core services by adding extra value to customers. But even if not actively desired by the customer, they still form part of the overall service experience. The authors add that customer's needs and expectations often vary by segment and not all core product will be surrounded by many supplementary services from all eight petals. For instance, people-processing services tend to be the most demanding in terms of supplementary elements, as, for instance, in hospitality, since they involve close (and often extended) interactions with customers. An example are the luxury hotels because they enhance their services by offering a set of additional services (figure 10).



Figure 10 - Core Product and Supplementary Services for a Luxury Hotel  
Source: Lovelock & Wright (2002)

In the dynamic and challenging environment of the travel and tourism industry, operators need to differentiate themselves to be successful and continue to offer superior performance. Thus, embracing the supplementary services can be a way to add value to core services, giving companies a competitive advantage over their competition (Naipaul & Parsa, 2000).

#### 2.2.2.4 Service encounters, touchpoints and servicescape

The service encounter is important to the service experience, whereas it can be defined as the interaction process between the server and the served and is formed by a triad with the customer and the personal contact, both exercising control over the process in the environment defined by the service organization (Bateson, 1985). It is also important to highlight that customers in the encounter interact with service according to a pre-existing understanding of how service should be. In this process customers value the service perception also based on their previous experiences.

The service experience encompasses multiple service encounters (Vorhees et al, 2017) and those encounters are portioning into touchpoints (McKechnie et al, 2011) and each touchpoint creates an encounter where the sum of the parts is greater than the whole. The touchpoints are elements that companies can control (depth) at some level, but to ensure that customers receives the planned experience, it is crucial to know all of the customer's touchpoints with the company.

According to the study of Grønholdt et al (2015) best performing companies are the ones which plan all service touchpoints based on experiential values. The authors suggest that customers should be included in concretizing all touch points and visualizing the kind of experience they want to have, while the companies must work with tools of service experience (journey map and blueprint) to be able to deliver the desired experience to the customer and consequently co-creating successful experiences. In sum, encounters and touchpoints will influence, positive or negative, on customers' service experience assessments.

Tourism services have clearly a functional component, as for instance in accommodation and transportation. But still, the experiential benefits are a critical part of the whole service evaluation (Otto & Ritchie, 1996). Bitner (1992) states that the human behaviour is influenced by the physical settings which also impact on the nature of social interactions, what the author calls servicescape. The original concept of servicescape became a popular term but used to exclude the influence of the human factor has on customers' perception.

Gupta and Vajic (2000) used the term 'interaction' to describe the elements that influence customer experience. Keiningham et al (2005) criticizes that previous studies have focused on the physical environment to approach the relationship between customer emotions and service outcomes and suggest that the term 'service environment' can comprehend the physical (ambient and design factors) and social environments (employee displayed emotion and customer climate). Slatten et al (2011), in turn, use the term 'atmosphere' to describe the service elements, supposing that they are separated in three groups: ambience factors, interaction factors, and design factors. The

elements of servicescape influencing the tourism services experiences, especially in tourist accommodation, will be further analysed in section 2.4.

### 2.2.2.5 Customer-to-customer compatibility

Service environment typically includes the personnel, the physical setting and the process of interaction between the service organization and the customer. But, many services are often produced in the presence of multiple customers, what places customer-to-customer encounters in evidence (Grove and Fisk, 1997). In many modes, there is an explicit or implicit recognition that others present at a service encounter might affect, positively or negatively, a customer's evaluation of the service (Grove and Fisk, 1997).

Because there is an increasing consciousness that C2C encounters are part of customers' service experiences and can affect their satisfaction and behaviours, there is also a growing understanding that service organizations can benefit by their efforts to influence C2C encounters (Martin, 2016). According to Wattanakamolchai (2008), there is a new participatory role that should be consistent with existing values, past experiences and needs of potential customers. And this compatibility must exist because customers will feel more familiar with the service requirement and can be more inclined to adjust their participatory level accordingly.

Martin & Pranter (1989, p.7) defined customer compatibility managements as: "... a process of first attracting homogeneous consumers to the service environment, then actively managing both the physical environment and customer-to-customer encounters in such a way as to enhance satisfying encounters and minimize dissatisfying encounters."

Martin (2016) explains that the concept of customer-to-customer compatibility started to be reasoned when managers noticed to match customers according to their compatibility. Grouping customers with common backgrounds and demographics, shared interests, similar personalities and other characteristics showed an influence on customer retention and improved the service experience. In accordance, Johnson & Grier (2013) consider that consumer-to-consumer interaction is an essential task for service providers because other consumers within the same service setting may spoil or enhance one's service experience.

Brack & Benkenstein (2012) states that customers prefer service environments in which they find similarity among others. The authors approach this role by classifying it as overall similarity or as the extent to which an individual feels that he/she is like other individuals in the service environment. According to Martin and Pranter (1989) there are cases in which compatibility management is important, as for instance, when service environments allow:



- customers to be in close physical proximity;
- verbal interaction among customers, especially in groups;
- customers to be engaged in many and varied activities;
- to attract a heterogeneous customer mix, as, for instance, in public services, such as public libraries, transport, leisure facilities, and health centers;
- that the core service is based on the social exchange;
- customers to wait for the service;
- customers to expect sharing time, space or service utensils with others.

The tourism industry is full of experiences that are social in nature (Rihova et al, 2015), and for some tourist accommodation, as the hostels, arousing a need for customer compatibility awareness seem to be crucial. But, Pranter & Martin (1991) advise that even in services considered social by nature, providers should not take the customer-to-customer interactions for granted, instead, they must actively manage customer behaviour to enhance the proportion of satisfying encounters and minimize the frequency of dissatisfying encounters. Accordingly, Rihova et al (2015, p.362) state that 'rather than striving to persuade socializing tourists that the service offering is valuable to them, tourism organizations benefit from recognizing how they can potentially play a role in facilitating tourist- to- tourist interactions'.

For instance, Yin & Poon (2016) findings show that in travel experiences of package tours, tourists are affected by the appearance, behaviours and language of other group members. Brack & Benkenstein (2012) highlights that dimensions of similarity such as appearance, race, age etc. may be included in the individual's judgments. Moreover, Johnson & Grier's (2013) experiment demonstrates that perceived cultural compatibility with consumers present in the same service setting significantly influences consumers' satisfaction towards the service.

Grove and Fisk (1997) alert that satisfying all customers with the same service delivery is almost impossible because people seem to have different ideas regarding what is appropriate and reasonable in any situation. Here, the instinctive reaction of the service provider is to assume that customer to customer interactions are beyond their control but, considering the importance of these interactions it should be the company's role to manage them (Rowley, 1995).

It is possible to service providers to establish a common understanding of conduct among customer, through signage, recorded messages, or even verbal instructions from the organizations' personnel (Grove and Fisk, 1997). It's up to managers to establish, communicate and enforce codes of conduct for customers, and policies to regulate, as for instance, a dress code that might avoid dissatisfaction (Martin and Pranter, 1989). But, it should be a managers' concern that this approach is not based on discriminatory strategies (Brack & Benkenstein, 2012), having in mind that targeting is not equal to exclusion. Instead, they should instil the need for a proper matching and management to enhance service experience.

## 2.3 Experience Management

Literature has been corroborating that experiencing a service implies on a subjective judgement, associated physiological states and in this mode no two people can have the same experience. However, in this dynamic customer businesses have also their firm's charge, that is why companies trying to design the operations management to experience has been a challenge for academics and practioners (Johnston & Kong, 2011). Thus, managing experiences has been in the forefront for many firms, and especially in tourism it has been in the core of its productivity chain. The approach of managing experiences has been developed along with some key concepts on experience theory and in this section, those concepts will be addressed as well as the diverse terms on the experience management.

### 2.3.1 Experiential theory development

Along the years experiences were at the core of attention, once marketing researchers and practitioners displayed their interest about experiences as the key for understanding and fulfilling customer needs and improve successful companies. For instance, Shaw and Ivens' (2005) research showed that 85% of senior business managers believed that differentiating focused only on the traditional elements, such as price, product and quality, is no longer a sustainable competitive advantage, thus started to face customer experience as the next competitive battleground. On the other hand, a survey with marketing professionals, showed that 70% of the respondents report the experience factor as being very important to their organizations and indicated their intention to apply it more widely in the future (Bigham, 2008).

There is an increasing recognizing of experiential power, mostly because of the advantages they may bring to businesses (table 4):

Table 4 Why are experiences important for businesses firms?

#### ***Experiences...***

- affect customer satisfaction;
- deliver customer loyalty;
- influence the customer's expectations;
- instill the customer's confidence;
- create emotional bonds with the customer;
- give an advantage over competitors;
- enhance differentiation;
- create a superior firm image;
- facilitate new customers' attraction and the entry into new markets;
- can be a factor of attractiveness to the employees;
- impacts the firm's profitability;
- have a positive impact on market performance

Source: Based on Johnston & Kong (2011); Candi et al (2013) and Grønholdt et al (2015)

Johnston & Kong (2011) reviewed some advantages of managing customer experience and highlighted that experience is important because it provides new means of competition; affects customer satisfaction; delivers customer loyalty; influences the

customer's expectations; instills customer's confidence; creates emotional bonds with the customer.

In a similar vein, Candi et al (2013) showed that staging experiences lead to a set of benefits. First, cultivating a competitive differentiation in the customer's minds can create a superior firm image and give an advantage over competitors. Also, there is the benefit of new customers' attraction and entry into new markets, because the more experiential services/products are the greater their potential to satisfy customers is.

Moreover, Candi et al's study suggests that employees may consciously or unconsciously equate the experiences created for customers within their own ideas of experience, being an experiential core factor of attractiveness to employees. And finally, experiential offerings have immediate impacts in firm's profitability, because companies with good abilities of working with both emotional and rational aspects of CEM are also the ones that achieve the best financial results, according to Grønholdt et al (2015) study. Additionally, customer experience management has a positive impact on differentiation and market performance.

In spite of the recognition of experiences importance, the point is that since Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) stated that people are constantly seeking for "fantasy, feelings, and fun", and introduced a new experiential approach into the consumer behaviour domain, experiences have grown as a field of study and because of that many authors contributed to the experience theory development (figure 11).

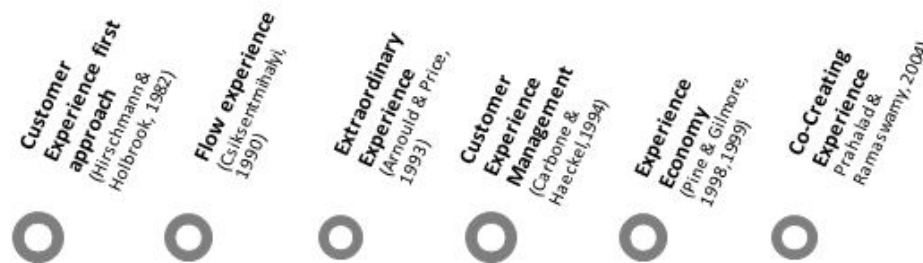


Figure 11 Timeline of customer experience theories

Before that, the concept has developed, and many related concepts and contexts were explored along. Here some key concepts are grouped in three main fundamentals: the flow, extraordinary and memorable experiences; the role of co-creation and the experience management, which will be further explored for being one of this research fundamentals.

### 2.3.1.1 The flow, Extraordinary and memorable experiences

Some authors considered experience in a more optimistic way as in the theory of flow. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) give a psychological approach to experiences and present that

this optimal experience is a state of mind of flow when investigating when in everyday life people have the feeling of happiness. For the author, the flow experience or optimal experience involves a sense of control, when people exercise control in difficult situations. This is a process that can happen also in typical situations of normal life and is a state of self-transcendence to a feeling of our being pushed forward. When beyond the flow, people create meaning through experience is when a unified flow experience is considered.

Arnould & Price (1993) named this optimal experience as extraordinary when they investigated how this extraordinary experience is constructed from the pre-trip, to the final stage, in the context of rafting. The authors identified three main themes associated with positive rafting experiences: the communion with nature, an emergent feeling in being close to nature; the *communitas* involving the feeling of being in communion with friends, a sense that may happen either between customers and guides (staff), and at last, personal growth and renewal of self, identified as the aspects that customers used to associate with rafting, creating a sense of rediscovering of self. Arnould & Price (1993) conclusion is that a trip unfolds the setting, guides and other people on the trip are important in articulating the narrative of experience. The approaches of Arnould & Price and Csikszentmihalyi studies converge in the sense that both focus in the experience as a phenomenon related with the inner aspects of oneself, and its relational/social character, under a more psychological and sociological way.

An approach more inclined to market and businesses was developed by Pine and Gilmore, which in 1999 considered customer experience as a new economic offering: the experience economy. The authors alerted that the economy is changing, mainly because of the technology revolution and the increase in the market competitiveness has pushed companies to search for differentiation. Beyond that, economic values are progressively in a change- from commodities to goods, to services and finally to experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). In the experience economy, societies devote a considerable part of their resources to pursue the good in life, in a constant search for joy, pleasure, and happiness. This new paradigm brings consequences to the companies that according to the authors must be awake for this new economy. Pine and Gilmore state that experiences must be memorable, which will be the main role to engage customers through memorable experiences.

### 2.3.1.2 The role of co-creation

More recently a new concept emerged, the co-creation. While some authors believe companies can provide customers with experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 2000; Schmitt, 1999), others state that the customer experience is a process engaging consumers and businesses, or in other words, it is a process co-created in the relationship between firms and customers. Binkhorst & Dekker (2009) explains that co-creation experience results from the interaction of an individual at a specific place and time, within the context of a specific act. In this manner, the co-creation could not be centred only in the company or the product because the customer is also part of the process. In experience co-

creation it is important to have an environment of dialogue and network between firms and customers.

Prahalad & Ramaswamy (2004) refer that the ancient logic of company-centric value creation could be no longer in vigour nowadays, especially because companies are not autonomous anymore. What happens nowadays is that consumers are seeking to influence, if they want, the businesses' system. Additionally, there is an important business value change and a radical shift in the way the dialog happens between customers and firms, especially because consumers have more access to information and use internet and technology to influence markets and interact with firms and other consumers.

Beyond that, there is the influence of global view. Geographical limits still exist, but information and technologies are approximating borders, once consumers can access information of firms all over the world. As emphasized by Prahalad & Ramaswamy (2004, p.4): "individuals share ideas and feelings without regarding for geographic and social barriers", and this networking is revolutionizing emerging markets and transforming the established ones. Authors refer that these revolutions reflect in a kind of activism from the part of consumers, which gives a feedback to companies and to other consumers. And, once this happens, consumers engage in the business process, seeking to exercise their influence in every part of the business system, armed with new tools.

While in the past conventional value creation happened with companies and companies had distinct roles of production, consumption and value occurred outside the markets, now consumers want to interact with companies and other consumers. This way, companies had to be prepared to co-create value with them during the process. In this new approach, firms cannot create value without the engagement of individuals, that is why co-creation experience depends highly on individuals and the co-creation supplants this exchange process.

It is also important to highlight that in this environment of co-creating experiences, the quality of experiences will depend on the infrastructure of interactions between consumers and firms. Firms must provide experience environment, build flexible experience network to allow consumers to construct and personalize experiences. This way, "eventually the roles of the company and the consumer converge toward a unique co-creation experience, or an "experience of one" (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

The understanding that firms play a crucial role in customer experience impose the need to go deeper on the research of how firms can lead the way for customers to live or have positive experiences. It is known that customers are not a passive element anymore, but how can firms input its elements on the customer's experience? The following section explores further on this question.

### 2.3.1.3 Experience management and its terminologies

Schmitt (2010) defines customer experience management as a set of frameworks, tools, and methodologies to manage customer experiences that have been applied in many industries. As a management discipline, customer experience stepped further when in 1994, Carbone & Haeckel wrote about the role of firms in developing an engineering customer experience. Since then, many definitions were created with the goal to manage positive and successful experiences. Performing, staging, designing, engineering, orchestrating or managing are some terms that englobe the importance to find tools and methodologies to approach experiences from a theoretical to a practical world.

#### *2.3.1.3.1 Performing and staging experiences*

Imagine a customer loyal to a certain hotel chain. The guest likes the room because of its comfort, loves the service because of the check-in efficiency, and even loves the staff because is treated by the name. But, even having stayed there many times, this guest will never have the same experience. Any hospitality service will be differently performed because people do them to people. Even when the environment continues the same, the intangible aspects (as for example staff and the encounter) are dynamic and will mark the uniqueness of customer experience.

Considering this dynamic aspect of tourism experience, Larsen and Aske (1992) used the theatre analogy for the service industries, describing guest-customer relations and interactions, using the Norway context to describe how hospitality services can work as the theatre. According to the authors, hospitality services must be planned such as a theatre stage, because in the 'service theatre', customer satisfaction will depend on the actors and their performance.

According to Hemmington (2007) hospitality businesses have similarities with the theatre mostly because of its focus on experience and performance, as both have a need to stage-manage experiences and its environment. Pine and Gilmore (1999) went further on the concept, stating that 'Work is theatre and every business a stage'. They consider that, in the experience economy, performers of all sorts, executives, managers, and other labourers must take a different view of their occupations. The authors embrace some principles of theatre (figure 12), making relations between the theatre processes with the business ones, where drama could be explained as the strategy, the script with processes, the theatre with work, performance with the offering, and the audience as the customers. It is explained as following:

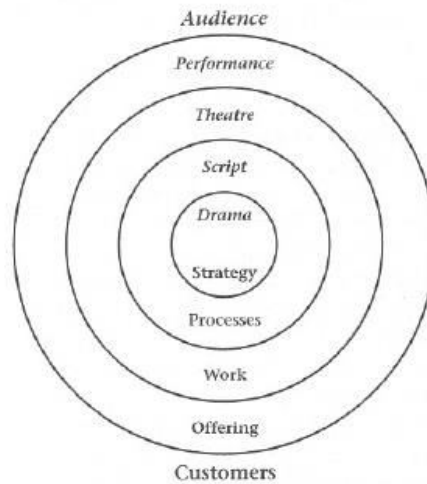


Figure 12 The enactment model  
Source: Pine and Gilmore, 1999.

**Drama** is central to the whole structure of performance; it comprises a written text, score, scenario, instruction, plan or map. The drama can be taken from place to place or time to time independent of the person or people who carry it. No matter what form the strategy takes, the owners of the enterprise reveal the drama over a duration of time (the strategic horizon). Drama provides the substance of action hoped for, regardless of the workplace in which the business stages its performance.

**Script** is it can transmit all that from time to time and from place to place, the basic codes of the event that pre-exists any given enactment. The script transmits the drama in ways that transcend specific moments, instance, or conventions. In business, processes are the script, usually codified approaches that an enterprise uses to enact its strategy. Employees must learn the script, identify its subtext and refine it to production, changing as required to ensure the best possible performance.

**Theatre** is the event enacted by a specific group of performers; what the performers do during production...the manifestation or representation of the drama/script. Theatre embodies both function and form that bring the drama and script to customers by staging a performance that engages them as an audience.

**Performance** is the whole constellation of events, most of them passing unnoticed, that take place in/among both performers and audience from the time the first spectator enters the field of performance. The offering is the performance, the economic value businesses create for customers.

To apply those principles on businesses Pine and Gilmore suggest a step-by-step approach to stage experiences (figure 13):

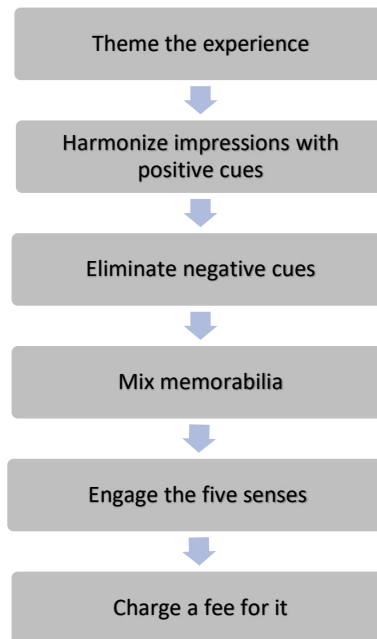


Figure 13 Steps for staging experiences  
Source: Pine and Gilmore (1999)

First, it is important to **theme the experience**. An engaging theme must change the guests' sense of reality. The richest venues possess themes that fully change one's sense of reality by affecting the experience of space, time and matter into a cohesive and realist whole. Themes are strengthened by creating multiple places within a place. Also, a theme should fit the character of the enterprise staging the experience.

As the second step it is necessary to **harmonize impressions with positive cues**. Companies must introduce cues affirming the nature of the experience. Impressions are the take way of the experience, the congruent integration of many impressions that affect the individual and thereby fulfill the theme. To create the desired impressions, companies must introduce cues that together affirm the nature of the desired experience for the guest. Each cue must support the theme, and none should contravene it.

Then, to **eliminate negative cues**. Different experiences rely on different types of impressions. Experience stagers also must eliminate anything that diminishes, contradicts or distracts attention from the theme. Too many haphazard cues can ruin an experience.

Reaching the marketing aspect it is possible to reach it by **mixing in memorabilia**. People have always purchased certain goods primarily for the memories they had, like postcards, shirts, etc. People purchase memorabilia as tangible artefacts of experiences, such items are often among an individual's most cherished possessions, worth far more to them than the cost of the physical artefact. So, selling memorabilia associated with an experience is one approach to extending an experience; turning items inherently part of experience into personalized memorabilia is another.



Also, **engage the five senses**. The more sensory an experience is the more memorable it will be. Services turn into engaging experiences when layered with sensory phenomena, the sensory stimulants that accompany an experience should support and enhance its theme.

And finally **charge a fee for your offering**, in Pine and Gilmore's words, "you are what you charge for". The transition to an economy of experiences fuels the engine of growth therefore will undergo many of the same changes encountered in the earlier transition from the industrial to the service economy. This transition begins when companies give away any experiences to better sell existing offering better. The history of economic progress consists of charging a fee for what once was free, in this case you're not truly selling an experience unless you charge admission.

Pine and Gilmore's perspective suggests that firms are the main responsible for offer experiences, what is not the perspective of co-creation. On the contrary, some authors sustain the point that due to the personal character of experiences, managers cannot deliver memorable experiences, but facilitate the development of an environment propitious to them. For example, Tung & Ritchie (2011) in their study investigated what is the essence of memorable experiences, pointing out what travel offering should follow to facilitate the memorable experiences:

Although travel planners cannot provide the experience itself, they can design the environment to influence the outcomes of experience, so the **usage of branding policies** to deliver the promise of memorable experiences tourist expect it will be the first point to follow.

Also, tourism planners can **surprise tourists** to surpass the expectations, purposefully anticipating the unexpected positive surprise to enhance the tourist's experience.

Another point to tourism planners is to **encourage memory recollection** at various sites of the travel journey. These memory points will attract tourists to purchase memorabilia souvenirs, and also to spread the word about their experience.

Finally, authors highlight the importance of **attracting to repeat visitation**, as it is needed to continue re-inventing the service offering to tourists who expect to have new memories.

#### *2.3.1.3.2 Designing experiences*

In the domain of the new service-dominant logic, service design emerges as an important issue to manage services and satisfy the customer's needs. According to Zeher (2009, p.2):

"The design of services with a view to creating memorable and satisfying customer experiences is not new, however, deliberate design and execution of service experiences as a distinctive management discipline with its own principles, tools, and techniques can be said to be a new approach".

The experience design is an approach to manage the creation of successful client experiences, which can include the design of the three-spatial dimension (pre-consumption, consumption, post-consumption), the five senses, interactivity, the personal meaning as well as the emotional context (Moritz, 2005). Designing experiences is an important role of service in which the design can be considered as the development of experience-centric services (Zomerdijk & Voss, 2009). Much has been said about the attributes of experiences, but the multiplicity of experience concepts suggests that the design of experience-centric service is multifaceted (Voss, Roth & Chase, 2008).

Service design is considered a new holistic, multidisciplinary and integrative field that helps services to be innovative, more useful, desirable for clients and more efficient and effective to organizations. It is a new field in which user-oriented strategies and concepts are designed to make services work better either for firms and customers. Service design is the design of the overall experience of service as well as the design of the process and strategy to provide that service (Moritz, 2005, p.39).

Service design is the process of understanding the client organization, and market to develop ideas and translate them into solutions to finally implement them. As explained previously in this text, products and services are different because the unique features of a service, impossibility for clients to compare a service experience with a product one. In Moritz (2005) words there are some crucial characteristics of service thinking:

First, service design should understand motivations and latent needs that clients have, even if they are not conscious of them. In this sense, service design should truly represent the client's perspective. In return, the firms should be aware of clients' needs, always considering their offering. Thus, service Design approaches the development of service systems which are focused either on the client and on the organization (co-creation process).

Furthermore, SD should address the unique feature of services. Services sometimes can be similar to products, but they are not them. On point is the overall experience customers have is driven by the service interface where customers are contacting over time with elements of service offering (touch points). These touchpoints could be considered experiences puzzle pieces, and in this mode, service design must look at the units of services as they are experienced together by clients.

The design is by essence multi-disciplinary and works with a diversity of fields, as well as service design. SD should involve all the actors whose participate in the process, and to achieve this goal it is important to use different methods and tools to ensure an excellent service experience.

Service design is also interactive and ongoing and should offer to the customer the possibility to have all the resources and components that they judge necessary to do what they want to do. SD enable behaviours and dynamics, for this, it should be open and easy to make changes. Service design also continues after the service is in use by monitoring and constant improvement, opening fields to innovation.

The design approach in services is important because it contributes to the interpretation of emerging cultural and social patterns and translates these patterns in a set of requirements for product and services systems (Morelli, 2002). In a marketing perspective, to design service systems is to evolve from traditional and standardized services to a targeted and personalized one. According to Morelli (2002), service design system has some specific characteristics:

There is a relationship between actors, the users, designers and service providers. In services, the providers usually shape the service together with users who take part in the production process. Services are socially constructed systems, and their characteristics are determined by the different cultural, social, economic and technological frames of the actors involved in their construction.

There is also a difference in production and consumption times because in services the production exists at the same time as the consumption. Also, while products are tangible objects, services are composed of intangible functionalities, and cannot be stored as they are processes which happen one time only.

Another important aspect of service design, it is its role in involving customer's needs into services, even though bringing the external measures of customer needs to improvements in services, is a complex translation process. As suggested by Hermann et al (2000) this process has mainly two different domains: marketeers that have an external focus on customers and engineering-based approaches that have a more internal focus, mostly in improvement processes.

In a similar perspective, Pullman & Moore (2006) state that service design could be delineated into two types of approaches: the operations perspective and the marketing perspective. The operation's approach is faced to profit maximization whereas marketing is based on capacity-demand management. They both have their impact on services and have been analysed by researchers, but few studies combine the two perspectives.

Pullman & Moore (2006) tried to mix the marketing and operations perspective and created a model for optimal service design. The authors state that three main variables should be considered in service design: the interaction between customers, the waiting time and the demand. Considering Pullman & Moore's perspective the service could linkage between creating a more desirable service by reducing customer's waiting time while having an appropriate demand or capacity management strategy, all of these combinations will lead to most profitable service.

Many authors emphasize the crescent demand for new services, but it is important to highlight that new services require new tools and procedures, thus, service design emerges as a possibility for new service system thinking (figure 14). Tax & Stuart (1997) developed a framework based on the design of new services. The author's state that the changing of some services elements can bring a new approach to the service system, in this mode, they determine the importance of the three main elements in the service system:

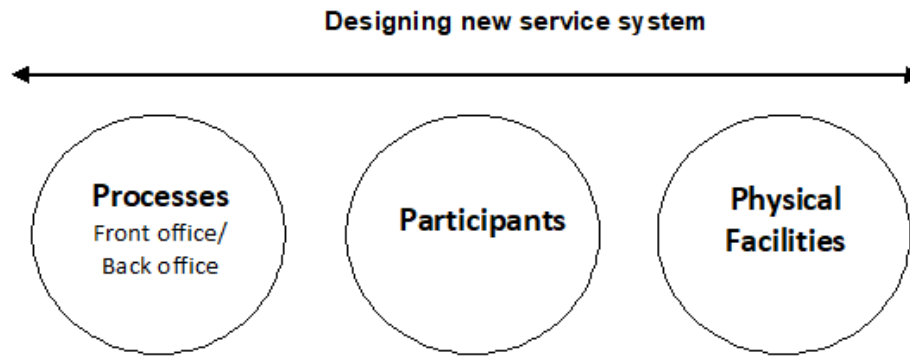


Figure 14 Tax and Stuart's framework on service design  
Source: based on Tax & Stuart (1997)

Modify **processes** based on the blueprinting to examine critical points in the process, a comprehensive evaluation of the new service processes provides input into system requirements and potential conflicts.

**Participants** are people involved in the service system; human resource plan should be though preparation of job descriptions, selection criteria, appraisal systems, training programs and compensation schemes, as well as delineating the customer role in service system should be delineated.

The **physical facilities** or physical environment influences customer and employee cognitive, emotional and physiological responses and behaviours and it is an important element to be considered in service design, such as: ambient conditions, space/function and signs, symbols and artefacts).

Tax & Stuart (1997) states that service design is still scarcely studied in services literature and faces some challenges (figure 15). Snelders & Vervloed (2014) add that a challenge in service design is to involve customers and make them understand the designed service because service design should show its functionality in an inviting way, leading the way to customers experience and what they can use by co-creating service.

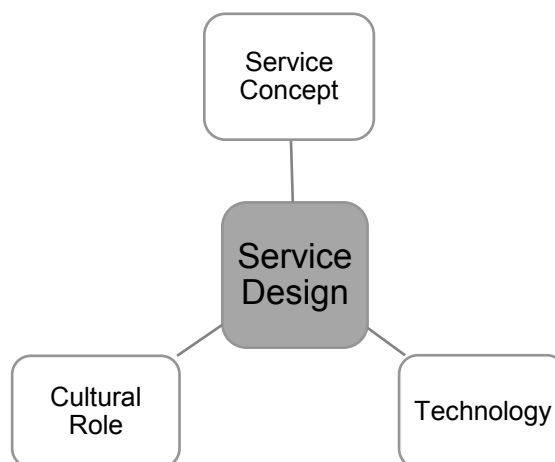


Figure 15 Main challenges of service design  
Source: based on Goldstein (2002), Pullman et al (2001), Roth & Menor (2003).

On the other hand, Goldstein et al (2002) emphasize that to understand the service concept is an important part of processes for service design, development and innovation to the service. The service concept should be drawn by customers' and providers' expectations of what service should be because this understanding will lead the way on how customer's needs and wishes are fulfilled by experience. In other words, understanding the service concept will help firms to successfully delineate the service design planning.

Also, the multicultural issues are important implications for service design and considering this role, new practices may need to be developed. There is still a lack of research regarding tailoring service to different customer segments, which also represent a challenge for managers to determine the process and attributes of service design. Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988) endorse those cultural aspects are important once customer expectations over a service are formed by a mix of marketing messages and previous expectations, so customers from different cultures have different expectations and perceptions about a service delivered.

Different service concepts and markets require different approaches to the design of services (Roth & Menor, 2003); this is why considering the cultural role in service design is so important. To go further in cultural aspects, Pullman et al (2001) researched to check how customers evaluate service design according to their own cultural norms and to the expected cultural norms of the service evaluated. The authors conducted a study with four food court enterprises, crossing with three nationalities. The results showed that different segments have different preferences, but either for certain universal and well-known service's attributes, the cultural particularities may not influence much. This way a strategy of customization by segments or standardization should be decided by the firm but always having in mind that multicultural aspects and environments have implications for service design.

Roth & Menor (2003) in their research agenda for services management, besides customer experiences, include technology issues as an important aspect to be conducted in service research, as well as for service design. The progress in technology in the last years stipulated that technology in information and communication has changed the service scenario. Internet, for instance, influenced the business models, service products and processes, the globalization of services, the heterogeneity and complexity of customer's demands in multiple channels and the entry of non-traditional competitors (Roth & Menor, 2003).

Over the years a challenge in designing activity has been to apply technological definitions in industrial artefacts, nowadays on service context, this challenge is still on. New technologies are an important driven force for the service design once internet technologies are continuously changing how providers interact with customers (Hill, Collier et al. 2002). As Morelli (2002, p.6) explains:

"The social construction of the technology domain concerns the ability of the social actors to influence innovation processes and to determine the paradigmatic context in which new

technologies, products, and services can be accepted or refused. Such a context depends on the capability of the actors to interpret, enhance, and emphasize certain (sometimes weak) innovation signals."

So, the new dimension in service design is to link technological dimension with social and cultural one (Morelli, 2002), as services social actors and the technology domain influence directly the whole system context. The main point is that the designer or the service designer should work as an engineer - sociologist (Callon, 1989 in Morelli, 2002), managing a mix of elements that involve people, cultural frames and technological artefacts.

### 2.3.1.3.3 Engineering experiences and CEM Frameworks

Carbone & Haeckel (1994) highlighted how firms can place customer experience in the core of their business, getting an advantage on customer preferences and differentiating from the competitors. In this process, firms should search for clues to "engineering" their business, providing customers with a good experience. This process is done by firms in orchestrating mechanical and physical clues, where mechanical clues are generated by things (smells, tastes, sounds and textures) and humanic clues which are related to interpersonal relationships in buying the experience.

Other authors as Schmitt (1999), contributed to customer experience management theory proposing a five-step program (figure 16) involving the analysis of the customer's world. Schmitt called for an eclectic, multi-method research approach for studying experiences which focuses on the customer's insights. The study asserts that experience marketing can deliver sensory, emotional, cognitive, behavioural and relational value to customers, to which social and informational based value can be added.

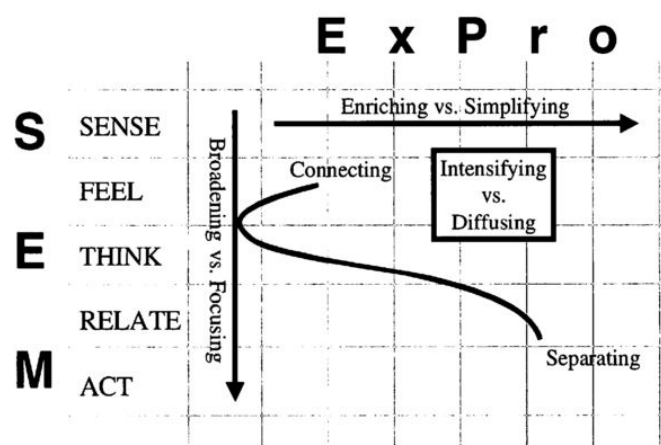


Figure 16 Schmitt's framework  
Source: Schmitt (1999)

The indications of Schmitt (2010) can be summarized in three steps: (i) analysing the experiential world of the customer; (ii) building the experience platform; (iii) implementing the experience.

Pine and Gilmore (1999) too developed a framework to lead the way in engaging the customer, as according to them 'staging experiences is not about entertaining customers is about engaging them'. Their framework consists in four realms (figure 17) suggesting level in which firms can begin competing based on an experience.

According to Pine and Gilmore (1999), companies can give sensory features to any good by accentuating the sensations created by its use. But, by doing this, requires attention from companies to which are the senses that affect customers the most. Moreover, companies must focus on the sensation customers experience, to consequently redesign goods and services to make them more appealing to customers. But, an experience is capable of engaging guests not only by the senses, but through other dimensions, as explained in Pine and Gilmore's (1999) 'experience realms'

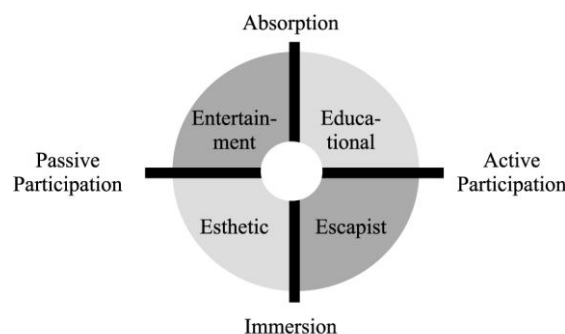


Figure 17 Experience realms  
Source: Pine and Gilmore (1999)

The first axis corresponds to the level of guest participation. At one end of the spectrum lies passive participation where customers do not directly affect or influence the performance. At the other end of the spectrum lies active participation, in which customers personally affect the performance or event that yields the experience.

The second vertical dimension of experience describes the type of connection or environmental relationship that unites customers with the event or performance. At one end of this spectrum lies absorption-occupying, which is a person's attention by bringing the experience into the mind, and at the other end, the immersion, becoming physically (or virtually) a part of the experience itself. In other words, if the experience "goes into" the guest, as when watching TV, then he is absorbing the experience. But, on the other hand, if the guest goes into the experience, as when playing a virtual reality game, then he is immersed in the experience. Both dimensions define the four "realms" of an experience: entertainment, education, escape, and aestheticism, as explained as follows:

**Entertainment** – is passively absorbed through the senses. Entertainment provides not only one of the oldest forms of experience but also one of the most developed and is today the most commonplace and familiar.

**Educational** – with education experiences the guest absorbs the event unfolding before him. To truly inform a person and increase his knowledge and/or skills, educational events must actively engage the mind and/or the body.

**Escapist** – is the opposite of pure entertainment, the guest of an escapist experience is completely immersed on it and actively involved.

**Esthetic** – In such experiences individuals immerse themselves but remain passive, they leave the event or environment they are immersed in essentially untouched, for example visiting an art gallery or museum.

As a theory recognized by most of the researchers, the four experience realms of Pine and Gilmore has been tested by many fields, including hospitality and tourism research. Mehmetoglu & Engen (2011) states that the four realms of experience are useful to understand better customer and visitor's preferences in a tourism context. Accordingly, Jurowski (2009) concludes that entertainment, education, escapism and esthetics are effective in helping tourism businesses in including experience as part of their business. However, the boundaries between these realms are fluid and unstructured, which means that a mix of these elements is not only possible as needed.

So, to meet the market needs and demands it is important to create and "stage" experiences for them, capturing the essence of the four dimensions - feeling, learning, being, and doing (Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2011). For example, Oh et al 's (2007) study measured the framework of the four realms in a Bed & Breakfast lodging context. Results pointed out that esthetic dimension appeared as a dominant determinant, in contrast with escapist and entertainment dimensions that were not statistically relevant.

Also, Pikkemaat et al (2009) analysed experience realms but under the vision of the wine tourism experience. The results were in consonance with Oh et al (2007), revealing that esthetic components such as landscape and information about wine, are success factors of high relevance in staging experiences. Considering the results, the authors highlight the potential to create experiences in wine tourism by creating an ideal atmosphere, guiding tourists and theming wine production.

Mehmetoglu & Engen (2011), on the other hand, analysed two types of tourist attractions: an event and a museum. The results showed that for the music festival the dimensions of escapism and esthetics have more influence on satisfaction than education and entertainment. While in the museum the dimensions of education and aesthetics were more important.

All the mentioned studies highlight the importance of esthetic dimension, which endorses the importance of staging an environment to experiences but also points out to the difference among results for each hospitality business, which implies that experiences need to be staged depending on the context and considering the particularities of each hospitality field.



Gentile et al (2007) fundament that a good experience must holistically and consistently involve a person at different levels. They created a conceptual framework (figure 18) considering the set of one's actions, the system of values and beliefs (from which lifestyles and behaviours are derived) and relationships. As a result, the authors suggest that firms should invest in six components of experience: sensorial, emotional, cognitive, pragmatic, lifestyle and relational. And those different stimuli must result in creating value for companies' products/services as well as increasing this perception for customers.

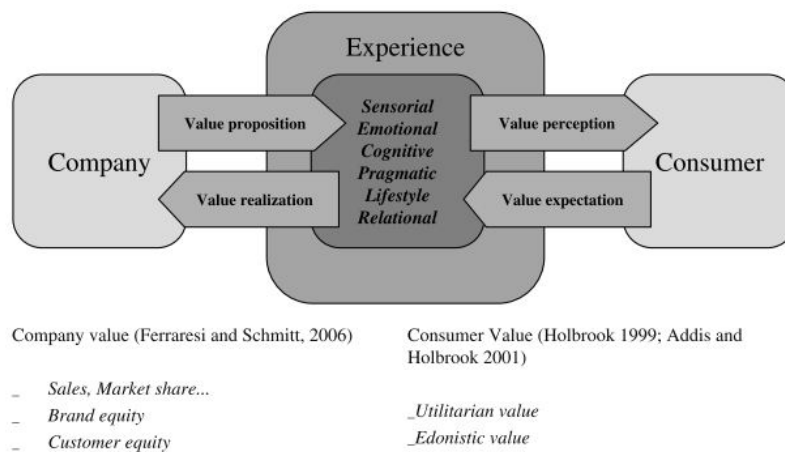


Figure 18 Gentile, Spiller and Noci's framework  
Source: Gentile et al (2007)

## 2.4 The service experience in tourism

Because of the subjective character of experiences, they are difficult to measure and to describe. However, literature made reasonable efforts to overcome those challenges. This section addresses how academics has been exploring experiences within inputs, dimensions and outcomes. Additionally, it presents three main models and frameworks on services and hospitality, going further on the key service features that enhance customer experience in different tourism sector contexts.

### 2.4.1 Inputs of Customer Experience

The experiential environment in tourism is formed by people and things that surrounds the tourist. For Binkhorst & Dekker (2009), tourists are human beings that during all the process of travel are bombarded by their own environment of a lifetime. And those elements influence tourists at home previous to the trip, in the process of travel decision making as well as during the trip.

According to Binkhorst & Dekker (2009), those elements create a chain of networks (figure 19) that hold the power to influence personal experience. Family, friends, the music that he/she likes, the internet, books, magazines, are some of the examples. Even at the destination or during the service encounters there are external elements that may affect one's mood and consequently quality on service experience.

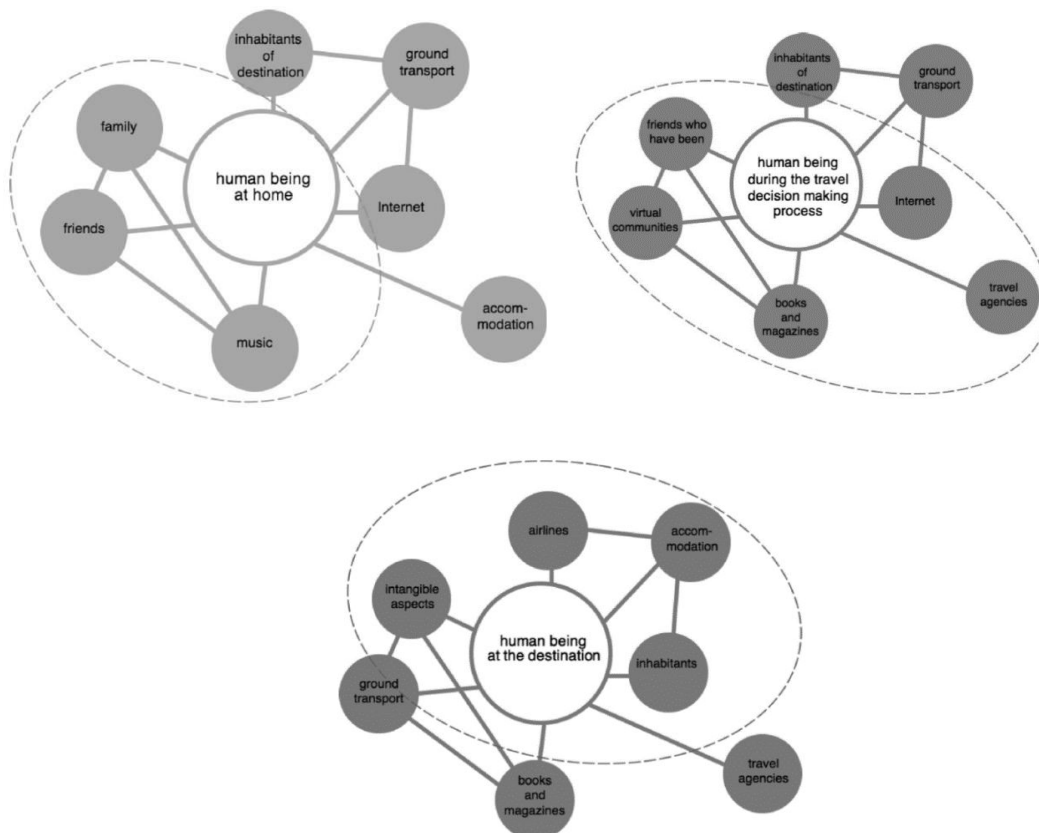


Figure 19 Elements influencing tourist's experience  
Source: Binkhorst & Dekker (2009)

Li (2000), call these influence as 'life world' which is related with each one's geographic consciousness. It refers to people's experience of life, for example with spaces, places, nature and culture that will influence an experience to be pleasant or not. Page et al (2011 in Sharma, 2008) termed it as 'cultural baggage', considering that tourists do not visit different places alone, but they travel with their own beliefs, values and behavioural mode. Sharma (2008, p.107) adds that:

"The scope of mixing the cultures is great when such cultural baggage's come into contact with other social settings. In this respect, tourism is all about people and how people as tourists interact with other locations and peoples, engaging in experiences that may influence their own or the host community attitudes, expectations, opinions, lifestyles, values, morals, modes of expressions and community structures."

Moreover, Schmitt (2010) states that all those references are dynamic, and some values may change over the course of a person's life. For example, as a student or early adult, a consumer may give more value to utilitarian aspects of a hotel, such as a clean room and basic hotel facilities. But later in life, he or she may desire certain aesthetic styles and seek hotels for their unique experiences tied to higher-order values (a stunning location in the middle of a rain forest with a spa and seemingly endless pool).

According to Jackson et al (1996) tourists' cognitions (including attributions) influence behaviour. The author explains that most people perceive that when they have a positive travel experience they have a personal control over them, what does not happen in negative cases when people associate the bad experiences to external factors. Jackson et al (1996) research highlights that when tourists are asked to recount the most positive and the most negative travel experience they had, they use to associate internal attributions to positive situations, while negative experiences are associated with the external attributions. For instance, positive travel experiences are associated to personal aspects, such as the feeling of learning new things or to overcome some challenge, while negative experiences may be related to problems with travel companies.

The point is that there are inputs or antecedents that influence customer experience which are beyond the control of service providers, external and situation factors. Tung (2011) indicates that customers input into service experience co-creation a set of cultural background, needs and expectations. Verhoef et al (2009), suggest that for firms to think about a customer experience management strategy, they must consider the situation moderators which include location, culture, economic climate, season, competition, etc; and consumer moderators, for instance socio-demographics, consumer attitudes. Tung et al (2011), in turn, indicates that customers input into service experience co-creation a set of cultural background, needs and expectations.

In the tourist accommodation context, Alcántar- Alcover et al (2013) highlight the duration of stay and the travel company (e.g. friends, family) as important elements influencing the hotel-stay intention. In turn, Walls et al (2011) divide the inputs of service experience in two main groups: (i) personal characteristics which englobes tourist sensitivity, personality, previous travel experience and expectations, and (ii) trip-related factors associated to the purpose of the trip, nature of hotel, among other characteristics of one's trip. Those inputs showed to be important because they explain why guests described their experience in a unique form, despite having about the same or similar

experiences. The main point here is that they perceived and interpreted their hotel stay experiences according to their personal and trip-related characteristics.

### *2.4.2 Dimensions of CE*

Even if there is an increasing effort to define and elucidate the experiential concept, little empirical research exists which attempts to identify and measure the dimensions of consumer experiences (Knutson et al, 2008; Walls et al, 2011). According to Santos (2016) hedonic values for the consumer are difficult to measure, however a sort of studies starts from analysing experience into constructs or dimensions (Knutson et al, 2009). Dividing experiences into dimensions it is like to put experience in different boxes, which in the end will converge into the same objective. It is to look at the phenomenon under different point of views to better understand its dynamics.

The service experience presupposes the involvement of a series of elements, such as a rational judgment or affective bonds that many times cannot be detached. For instance, in the context of hotels' services, Knutson et al (2009) indicate that there are four dimensions that play an important role on customer experience: benefit, convenience, incentive and environment. In which, the benefit includes the practical nature of the hotel experience, as safety, reliability and consistency, it is related to utility in elements as location, availability, fitness centre, room service, etc. The convenience is a time-based dimension and involves the logical configuration of guest room and hotel facilities. The incentive embraces price incentives and nonmonetary incentives, including frequent guest programs and so on. Finally, environment is whether guests want an stimulating, entertaining, motivating and interactive environment.

Knutson et al (2009) terms are a valid point of view and have described experiential dimension under management and tourism lens but in different terms. The more popular are summarized as following (table 5):

Table 5 Literature on experience dimensions

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Authors</i>	<i>Author's Term</i>	<i>Area/Subarea</i>
Emotional	Han & Back (2007)	Emotional	Tourism & Hospitality/Hotels
	Gentile et al (2007)	Emotional	Management/theoretical
	Verhoelf et al (2009)	Affective	Management/theoretical
	Xu & Chan (2010)	Emotional	Tourism & Hospitality/tours
	Nasermoadeli et al (2013)	Emotional	Management/theoretical paper
	Bharwani & Jauhari (2013)	Emotional	Tourism & Hospitality/staff
	Han & Jeong (2013)	Emotional	Tourism & Hosp./restaurants
	Walls (2013)	Emotive	Hospitality/hotels
Cognitive	Carreira et al (2014)	Emotional	Tourism & Hosp/Transport
	Gentile et al (2007)	Cognitive & Pragmatic	Management/theoretical paper
	Verhoelf et al (2009)	Cognitive & Physical	Management/theoretical paper
	Walls (2013)	Cognitive	Tourism & Hosp./hotels
	Carreira et al (2014)	Cognitive	Tourism & Hosp./Transport
	Cetin& Walls (2015)	Physical environment	Tourism & Hospitality/hotels
Social	Gentile et al (2007)	Lifestyle & Relational	Management/theoretical paper
	Verhoelf et al (2009)	Social	Management/theoretical paper
	Nasermoadeli et al (2013)	Social experience	Management/theoretical paper
	Walls (2013)	Social/self	Tourism & Hosp/hotels
	Bharwani& Jauhari (2013)	Cultural	Tourism & Hospitality/staff
	Carreira et al (2014)	Behaviour	Tourism & Hosp./Transport
	Cetin& Walls (2015)	Social interaction	Tourism & Hospitality/hotels
Sensorial	Gentile et al (2007)	Sensorial	Management/theoretical paper
	Nasermoadeli et al (2013)	Sensory	Management/theoretical paper
	Walls (2013)	Physiological ambiance	Hospitality/hotels

The emotional aspect is the dimension most explored by authors. Verhoelf et al (2009) use the term affective dimension to explain how customers involves with the company, but several authors (Gentile et al, 2007, Nasermoadeli et al, 2013, Carreira et al , 2014) use the term emotional dimension or construct. The **emotional dimension** is related with emotions, moods and feelings and it is highlighted as crucial to understand hospitality services. For instance, Han & Back (2007) affirm that accommodation services can generate in customers, feelings and sensations such as: peacefulness, upset, romantic love, shame, excitement, and surprise. Accordingly, Xu & Chan (2010) highlight that tourists search in tours services an opportunity for recognition and escapism, peace of mind and relaxation, hedonics and involvement, suggesting that consumers are mainly searching for pleasure in their leisure time. Han & Jeong (2013) explores the emotional aspects within restaurants' services and their findings show that sentimentality, comfort and stimulation are associated crucial elements.

Much is related to the subjective aspect of feelings and emotions in experiences, but subjectivity of experience is also based on the cognition. Rational and emotional are two sides of the same coin but some authors suggest that actions such as learning, evaluating and judging are part of the **cognitive dimension**. The cognitive process uses actual knowledge and transforms it in a new knowledge. According to Gentile et al (2007) it relates to thinking, attention, perception and conscious mental process, using creativity or problem solving. Cognitive dimension can also be related to pragmatic and physical attributes of the service (Gentile et al, 2007, Verhoelf et al, 2009), because a positive experience can also involve the sense of usability.

The **sensorial dimension** consists in involving customer's through senses, as services can lead ways to arouse customer's vision, smell, touch, hearing and taste to enhance memorable experiences. Through sensory strategies (Nasermoadeli et al, 2013) it is possible to arouse aesthetical pleasure, excitement, satisfaction and sense of beauty (Gentile et al, 2007). When services for instance use background music, aroma in the environment and gastronomic activities, they generate triggers to engage customers' senses appealing to develop a physical but subtle experience.

The **social dimension** emerges as the fourth key dimension on the customer experience research. Although it has been a subject partially neglected in management theory, in tourism and hospitality research it has been gaining attention, especially due to the value of human factor on tourism services. The **social dimension** is the human component of experiences. Gentile et al (2007) explains that frequently customers share with others or engage with certain values that the company/brand embody; in this mode the offering may be able to provide either a social experience. For Bharwani & Jauhari (2013) the cultural aspects are also relevant in the social experience. Especially in hospitality context, cultural divergences could affect the quality of experiences, for instance, when guests and hosts are from different nationalities, sensitivity to cultures could play an important role in building memorable interactions. In sum, the social experience is related to a social context, in which there is a relational and interactional aspect.

According to Verhoef et al. (2009), customer experience is holistic in nature and involves the customer's physical, cognitive, affective and social responses to the service organization. But according to Miao and Mattila (2011) those multiple dimensions may interact with each other to affect customer experiences.

Literature has been attributing many consequences of staging experiences and carrying hedonic appeal in tourism. In what concerns creating offerings with an experiential core, Candi et al (2013) highlights that experiences are an opportunity for hospitality businesses, especially SMEs, to innovate and create competitive advantage. According to the authors, experiences contribute to success by enhancing a firm's image, its attractiveness to employees and its ability to enter new markets.

In a personally-driven approach, Chandralal & Valenzuela (2013) identified that tourism experiences generates a variety of personally significant outcomes, of which can be highlighted: (i) the relationship development, primarily important aspect for travellers because they can strengthen the existing bonds with the travel companions (e.g. friends) and developing new friendships with other travellers and locals; (ii) self-development, in which travellers refer to beneficial outcomes of the trip, as for instance, to enhance their intellectual capacity, to broaden perspectives about life and the world, to change the self- identity, to make self- renewals and to acquire new skills; and finally (iii) the enhanced family wellbeing, that travellers consider trips as an opportunity to enhance family togetherness, family happiness and improvement of children's knowledge about the world.

### 2.4.3 Outcomes of CE

In what concerns service experience outcomes in tourism (table 6), most studies support the findings of Pine and Gilmore (1998) and reiterate that experience is an important and complex dimension that shapes the behavioural intentions.

Table 6 Literature review on tourist-service experience outcomes

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Authors</b>
Loyalty	Polo-Peña, Jamilena and Molina (2013); Cetin and Dincer (2013); Carreira, Patrício, Jorge and Magee (2014); Ali, Kim, Li & Jeon (2016); Wu (2017); Sotiriadis (2017)
Satisfaction	Teng (2011); Miao & Mattila (2011); Carreira, Patrício, Jorge and Magee (2014); Miao (2014); Carlson, Rosenberger & Rahman (2016); Sotiriadis (2017); Tapar, Dhaigude, and Jawed (2017);
Overall /perceived experience/value	Teng (2011); Walls, Okumus, Wang and Kwun (2011); Walls, Okumus, Wang and Kwun (2011b); Polo-Peña, Jamilena, Molina (2013); Walls (2013); Carreira, Patrício, Jorge and Magee (2014)
Revisit intentions	Carlson, Rosenberger & Rahman (2016); Brida, Meleddu and Pulina (2016); Tapar, Dhaigude, and Jawed (2017)
Perceived quality	Wan (2013); Sotiriadis (2017); Mohsin and Lengler (2015)
Emotional responses	Miao & Mattila (2011);
Word-of-mouth	Cetin and Dincer (2013)
Customer delight	Torres & Kline (2011)

Source: based on the authors cited

Thus, many studies have analysed service experience impacts on consumer behaviours and assessments, such as loyalty (Polo-Peña et al, 2013; Cetin and Dincer, 2013; Carreira et al, 2014; Ali et al (2016), Wu, 2017; Sotiriadis, 2017) and satisfaction (Teng, 2011; Miao & Mattila, 2011; Carreira et al 2014; Miao, 2014; Carlson et al 2016; Sotiriadis, 2017; Tapar, Dhaigude, and Jawed, 2017). For Cetin and Dincer (2013) experience dimensions are closely related with customers' loyalty and recommendation behaviours. Additionally, Polo-Peña et al (2013) consider that loyalty can englobe the recommendation intention and the repurchase intention. And according to their research when the customers have a previous experience with the service they give more importance to the affective value of the experience, while customers staying for the first time give more importance to functional values.

There is also the impact on perceived value or experience (Teng, 2011; Walls et al, 2011; Walls et al, 2011b; Polo-Peña et al, 2013; Walls, 2013; Carreira et al, 2014), which consists in overall assessment of the utility or experience of the service based on customer's perceptions (Zeithaml, 1998 in Walls, 2011). But, more recently, many studies have focused in the perceived quality (Wan, 2013; Mohsin and Lengler, 2015; Sotiriadis, 2017), considering that the experience quality is the deciding factor for future actions, as the revisit intention (Carlson, Rosenberger & Rahman, 2016; Brida, Meleddu

and Pulina, 2016); Tapar, Dhaigude, and Jawed, 2017) and the word-of-mouth (Cetin and Dincer, 2013).

The service experience in tourism is also strictly correlated with emotional responses, Miao and Mattila (2011), for instance, considering that in the context of hospitality services, to have a negative encounter with other customers can impact customer satisfaction and have a negative effect on consumers' symbolic emotional responses. In the opposite vein, positive touchpoints can play an important role in service experience. Torres and Kline (2006) consider delight, an emotion that is a combination of high levels of pleasure (joy, elation) and arousal and according to Ali et al (2016) customer delight is crucial because it influences customer satisfaction and loyalty. In this mode, the empirical research of this manuscript will focus on the positive perceived experience.

#### *2.4.4 Main models of experience on Services and hospitality*

As the complex theme evolving a holist field, experiences in services and tourism have been further described in theoretical models that can help researchers to develop on customer experience issues. Here three models were identified (Verhoef et al's, 2009; Tung, 2011; Walls et al, 2011) and will be further described to support one of the outputs of this manuscript, a model on hostel experiences management.

Verhoef et al (2009) designed a conceptual model (figure 20) applied to retail services in order to successfully manage customer experiences. The authors considered that there are some determinants of customer experience, which include social environment, the service interface, the retail atmosphere, the assortment, the price and promotions. The model includes today's multi-channel environment and a dynamic component, which is the time  $t$ , affected by past experience  $t-1$ . The authors include the fact that there are some external factors influencing customer experience, called as situational and consumer moderators.



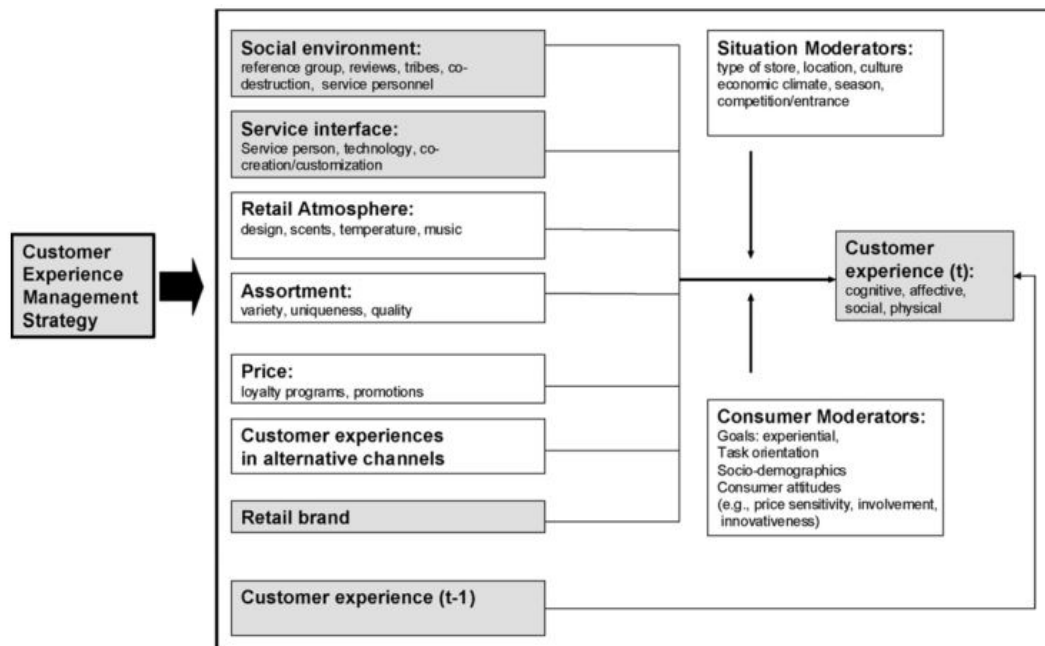


Figure 20 CEM at services model  
Source: Verhoef et al (2009)

In sum, Verhoef et al's model assumes that customer experience is holistic in nature and involves the customer's cognitive, affective, emotional, social and physical responses. As well, the authors highlight that the experience is created not only by elements which providers can control (e.g., service interface, retail atmosphere, assortment, price) but also by elements that are outside of providers control (e.g., influence of others, purpose of shopping). Finally, Verhoef et al's model suggest that the companies must consider this broader conceptualization of how the customer's experience is created when designing customer experience management strategies.

Applied to commercial hospitality (restaurants and tourist accommodation), Teng's (2011) model (figure 21) gives emphasis on the common core elements of both sectors experiential settings. The model assumes that there is a dynamic and interactive cycle involving three main components: (1) hospitality provider: incorporating host employees and sensory inputs related to hospitality delivery and the environment; (2) consumers: including guest customers and other guest customers; (3) interactions: the experience formed by the actions of the hospitality provider and consumers.

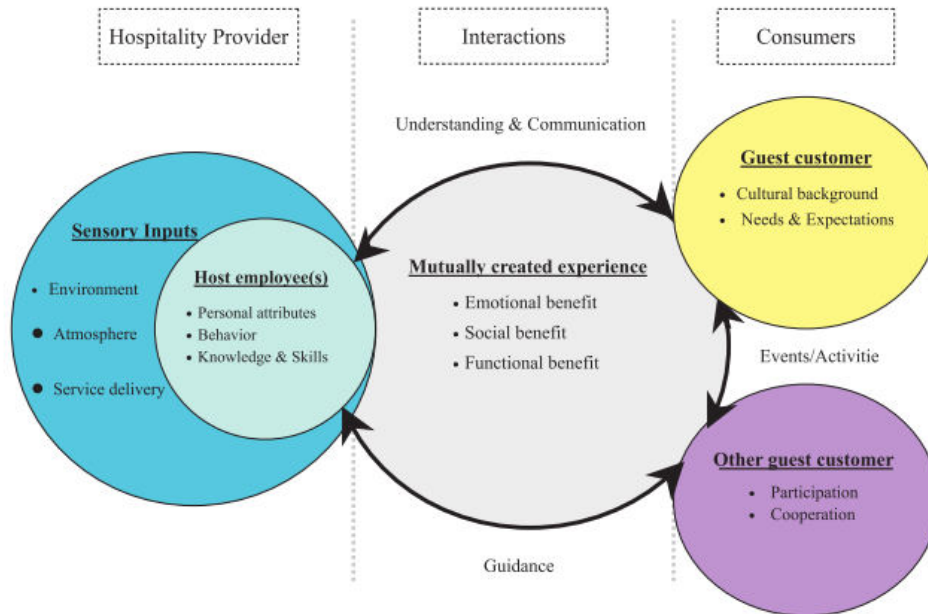


Figure 21 CE commercial hospitality model  
Source: Teng (2011)

Teng's (2011) findings indicate that hospitality experiences rely primarily on customer emotional and social values, including perceived categories such as: interpersonal interaction, psychological connection, openness to different cultures, sensation of satisfaction and perceived value. Additionally, findings demonstrate that host employee personal attributes and behaviour significantly influence customer perceived experience and the guest–host relationship. In this mode, Teng's model sustain that hospitality experience is mainly based on the elements and dynamics concerning the triad host/employees - guest customer - other guests.

On the other hand, Walls et al (2011) model (figure 22) was specifically applied to hotels. The authors sustain that consumer experiences are 'derived through a unique combination of responses to physical environment dimensions and human interaction dimensions'. Their model emphasized that consumers are triggered by a series of physical (e.g. ambience, multi-sensory, space/function and signage/symbol/artefact) and human (e.g. employees and fellow guest's attitudes and behaviours) elements on service encounters. But also, fundament that those experiences are significantly impacted by personal characteristics and trip-related factors that make the experience elements uniquely perceived by each guest.

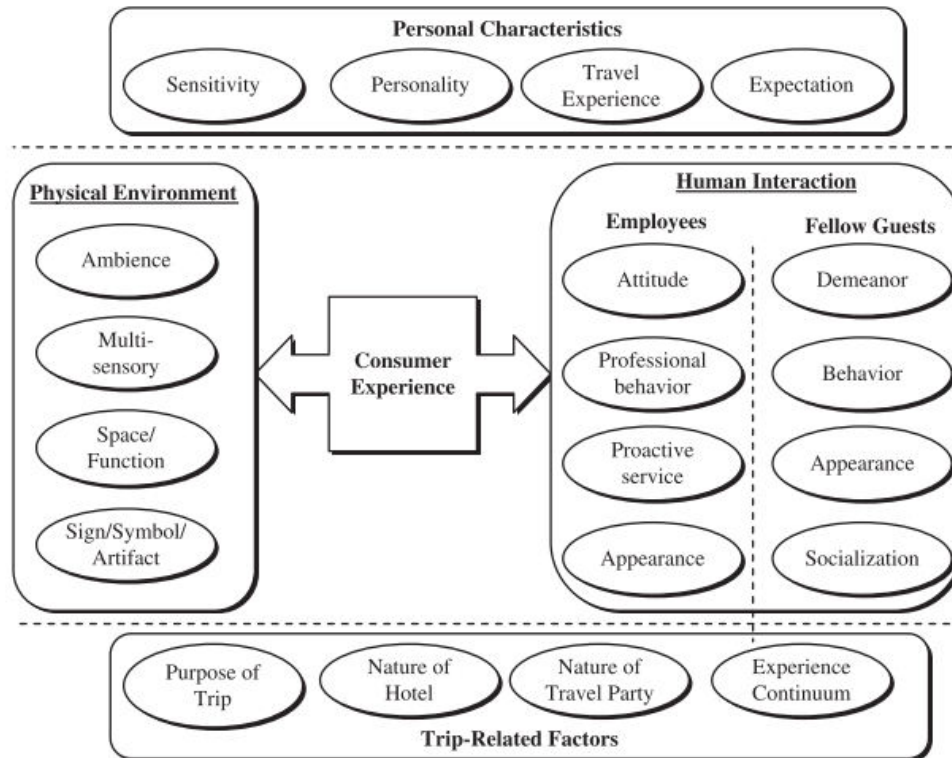


Figure 22 CE at hotels model  
Source: Walls et al (2011)

Summarizing, Walls et al (2011) model sustain that hotel's guests look for congruency in physical environment and human interaction settings, even though the individual characteristics play an important role on customer experience. Additionally, the authors suggest that hotel managers must look from a holistic perspective and narrow focus to deliver memorable positive experiences, paying particularly attention to the specific physical and human dimensions that the service can be responsible for. However, this was a model designed to luxury hotels experiences and literature suggest that each sector and context can be influential to singular customer experiences.

#### *2.4.5 Features enhancing experiences in tourism services*

According to Gupta and Vajic (2000) experience is a phenomenon that is socially produced and context specific. A theoretical framework suitable for studying it, should therefore, capture the complexity of the relationship between individual cognition and context. In the case of tourism services, those contexts are multiple, what in certain form requires applied studies. According to Tourism Satellite Account (UNWTO, 2017b) tourism sectors englobe: accommodation, food and beverage, transportation, tours operator, cultural services, recreational activities and other services. Each of those sectors has its own singularities that may influence on customer experience.

Patrício et al (2004) add that there are some attributes of service that contribute to the customer experience and those items (Cetin and Dincer, 2013) or factors (Carreira et al, 2014) can either influence customers perceptions and behaviours. Thus, unveiling those

key features based on the service context can lead to a better understanding of experiences in services. In the last two decades, literature has been addressing some of these features, considering different sectors (table 7).

Table 7 Enhancers of experience on tourist-services

<i><b>Authors</b></i>	<i><b>Sector</b></i>	<i><b>Enhancers</b></i>
<b><i>Cultural attractions</i></b>		
Jauhari and Sanjeev (2010)	temples	infrastructure and hygiene
Brida, Meleddu and Pulina (2016)	museums	activities, guidance, safety
Wu (2017)	museums	visitor's interactions
<b><i>Recreational activities &amp; Events</i></b>		
Klaus & Makan (2011)	sports tourism	interactions with other participants, efficiency of staff
Slåtten, Krogh & Connolly (2011)	theme parks	ambience factors (light, sound, and smells), participation in activities, interactions with other customers, interaction between customers and employees.
Wan (2013)	casinos	design - spaciousness and openness; architectural style; exterior design; interior decor; theme; signage; floor layout; colour; air temperature and quality; lighting; and greenery/natural landscape
Ali, Kim, Li & Jeon (2016)	theme parks	physical setting, interaction with staff and interaction with other customers
Carlson, Rosenberger & Rahman (2016)	major events	infrastructure, interactions with others, value for money, convenience, activities
Kolar (2016)	escape games	social interactions, activities
Åstrøm (2017)	cruises	naming, employee interaction, music, lightening, design
Sotiriadis (2017)	nature-based attractions	natural and built settings, marketing activities.
<b><i>Transport</i></b>		
Carreira, Patrício, Jorge and Magee (2014)	bus trip	individual space, information provision, staff's skills, social environment, vehicle maintenance, off-board facilities, ticket line service
<b><i>Hospitality (F&amp;B+ accommodation)</i></b>		
Tucker & Lynch (2005)	B&B and Homestay	interaction between hosts and guests
Knutson, Beck, Kim and Cha (2009)	hotels	safety, reliability, location, availability, fitness centre, room service, guest room and hotel facilities, amenities, easiness of booking the room, price incentives, room upgrades, special dinners.
(it continues)		

Miao & Mattila (2011)	restaurants	interactions between customers
Teng (2011)	hotels and restaurants	environment (atmosphere and service delivery) interpersonal interactions between the host and guest, openness to cultural differences,
Torre & Kline (2011)	hotels	other customers, employees, organizational and environmental influences
Walls, Okumus, Wang and Kwun (2011b)	luxury hotels	multisensory- (colour, odour, temperature, humidity, noise, music, view), space/function (architecture, layout, space, furnishing, equipment).; sign/symbol/artefact (quality of materials, signage, personal artefacts); guest-to-staff encounters; guest-to-guest encounters
Walls, Okumus, Wang and Kwun (2011a)	hospitality	human interaction, physical experience
Alcántar- Alcover, Artacho-Ramírez, Martínez-Guillamón, Campos-Soriano (2013)	hotels	activities and atmosphere
Bharwani and Jauhari (2013)	hospitality services	interactions with employees
Cetin and Dincer (2013)	luxury hotels	safety and security, staff showing personal care, location of the facility, technical knowledge of staff, quality of materials and architectural design
Polo-Peña, Jamilena, Molina (2013)	rural hospitality	facilities, staff-attention, convenience
Walls (2013)	hotels	physical environment (design, upkeep, ambience), human interaction (attentiveness/caring, professionalism, reliability, guest-to-guest)
Rageh, Melewar & Woodside (2013)	Luxury hotels	comfort, educational, hedonic, novelty, recognition, relational, safety, and beauty.
Miao (2014)	restaurants	interactions between customers
Cetin and Walls (2015)	luxury hotels	ambiance, space/function/amenities, design, and signs/symbols/artefacts; interactions with staff (professionalism, attentiveness/customization, attitude) and interactions with other guests
Mohsin and Lengler (2015)	budget hotels	in room-dining, room amenities, hotel access and safety, front office services,

Concerning cultural attractions, Jauhari and Sanjeev (2010) explains that spiritual and cultural sites can be strictly related with customer experiences. The author highlights that there are some factors which are beyond the control of service providers. However, the infrastructure and the hygiene are aspects that can enhance a superior customer experience in temples. In the context of museums, Brida, Meleddu and Pulina (2016)

states that museums are important attractions to boost urban tourism, and a positive interaction in them, can influence customer's intention to revisit. In this mode, heritage administrators can enhance visitor's experience by providing some elements, such as: activities, guidance and safety. On the other hand, Wu (2017) adds that in modern museums visitors look for 'edutainment', a mixing of education and entertainment, and consider valuable the act dimension on leisure experiences. The author suggests that a crucial feature to enhance customer experience, in this type of cultural attractions, is the visitor's engagement with the museum exhibits, in other words, managers should invest in the visitor's interactions.

In the field of recreational activities and events. Klaus & Maklan (2011) explored sports tourism customer experience in the context of a freeride mountain bike camp. Their results pointed out that the core experience of this type of activity is related with hedonic enjoyment and personal progression, elements that service providers cannot influence directly. However, social interactions and efficiency emerge as features that can enable and facilitate a positive experience. In a similar vein, Carlson, Rosenberger & Rahman (2016) indicate that in major events practitioners should focus on some 'motivator attributes' such as infrastructure, interactions with others, value for money, convenience, activities and use them to create experience environments to delivery, social-psychological benefits so that consumers have a satisfying experience.

In the winter parks context, Slåtten et al (2011) study indicated that ambiance factors and interaction among customers have significance for customers' positive emotions. They suggest that service providers can invest in ambiance factors such as light, sound, and smells; and in facilitating participation in activities, interactions with other customers and interaction between customers and employees to successfully enhance customer experience. In accordance, Ali, Kim, Li & Jeon (2016) suggested that theme park managers need to pay attention to maintaining a good physical setting, managing their human resources well and managing the behaviour of other customers to ensure that their customers receive delightful experiences.

Wan (2011) in turn, focused on the physical settings and highlights that managers must pay attention to and to the design because they could affect a customer's total service experience. The author identified that in the context of casinos there are some elements which are crucial to enhance customer experience namely, the design - spaciousness and openness; architectural style; exterior design; interior decor; theme; signage; floor layout; colour; air temperature and quality; lighting; and greenery/natural landscape.

Kolar (2016) investigated the customer experience in escape rooms, a ludical and challenging attraction that appeals to social interactions and activities. The author's results suggested that this type of experience has as main concept the social component of the gameplay. Åstrøm (2017) also suggested that tourist experiences have a ludical appeal and identified that in the cruise industry to give a theme to a cruise is a differential to enhance this type of experience. The author suggest that decision makers should consider the naming of spaces, lighting and employee interaction when designing themed experiences. In the context of nature-based tourism, Sotiriadis (2017) identified that tourists look for escapism and esthetics experiences. In this mode service providers

must invest in natural and built settings and marketing activities to enhance a positive overall perceived quality.

Carreira et al (2014) consider that enhancing the travel experience has become a crucial consideration for transportation companies to promote differentiation and customer loyalty. The author emphasizes that, in the context of transportation, there are some experience factors that can trigger passenger's cognitive and emotional responses, such as individual space, information provision, staff's skills, social environment, vehicle maintenance, off-board facilities and ticket line service. Moreover, the study highlights that dimensions of individual comfort and vehicle maintenance are the ones with the strongest impact on experience, suggesting that transportation providers should maintain a strong focus on providing a good core service.

Most of the key features of experiences studies are associated with the hospitality industry. According to Lashley (2015) hospitality is used as a word to describe a variety of sectors initially motivated by a public relation needed to cloud over the commercial nature of hotels, restaurants, and bars', but the author also states that hospitality can be used as a metaphor for receiving people into non-hospitality industry spaces.

In addition, Hemmington (2007) refer that the main definitions of hospitality are concerning the relations between hosts and guests, which are mostly about generosity, friendliness and entertainment. Moreover, hospitality could be defined as an experience because as suggested by the author, hospitality business should focus on the guest experience and in staging memorable experience that stimulate the guest's senses. Hemmington (2007, p.754) complements about the hospitality managers and businesses:

"They must behave like hosts, taking responsibility for the experience and creating lots of little surprises. They must appoint and develop their staff as performers and the cast in the experience. They must create a feeling of generosity, avoid parsimony, and not allow financial and operational control procedures to dominate the guest experience."

In the restaurant sector, the study of Miao & Mattila (2011) explains whether the interactions with other customers can influence customer experience, especially because sharing the service environment with other customers is often an inherent part of the experience. There is also the understanding that physical presence of other customers can influence consumer's emotional state in service encounter. Miao (2014) explains that consumers inhibit emotional displays and often engage in passive emotion-focused coping to deal with the behaviour of others, what presuppose that there is a significant influence of copying behaviour and emotional aspects in service encounter quality.

Tucker & Lynch (2005), for instance, sustain that managers must consider doing a lifestyle segmentation to achieve psychographic matching between hosts and guests in Bed and Breakfast and homestay accommodation. According to the authors, in hospitality services, this 'host-guest' dating is crucial to improve customer experience. Moreover, Teng (2011) highlights that in restaurant and hotels the environment (atmosphere and service delivery), interpersonal interactions between the host and guest and openness to cultural differences are crucial factor to enhance customer experience.

Many other authors attribute the importance of staff interactions with guests to enhance customer experience (e.g. Bharwani and Jauhari, 2013), highlighting that they must be: knowledgeable, attentive, caring, professional and reliable (Cetin & Walls, 2013; Walls, 2013; Polo-Peña et al, 2013), either they consider the importance of the guest-to-guest interactions (Walls et al, 2011b; Walls, 2013); Cetin and Walls, 2015)

But, Torres & Kline (2011) state that beyond the importance of other customers and employees, there are the organizational and environmental influences. Alcántar- Alcover, Artacho-Ramírez, Martínez-Guillamón, Campos-Soriano (2013) consider that in hotels, activities and atmosphere are key features to enhance customer experience. Polo- Peña, Jamilena and Molina (2013) highlights that, in rural hotels, facilities and convenience are key features, beyond the staff attention, while in budget hotels, Mohsin and Lengler (2015) identified in room-dining, room amenities, hotel access and safety, front office services.

In turn, in luxury hotels some authors have been exploring some other aspects such as comfort, safety and security, location of the facility and architectural design, but especially some beauty/multisensory, design and architecture aspects such as: colour, odour, temperature, humidity, noise, music, view, layout, space, furnishing, equipment, sign/symbol/artefact - quality of materials (Walls et al, 2011; Walls et al, 2011b; Cetin and Dincer, 2013; Rageh, Melewar & Woodside, 2013; Cetin & Walls, 2015). This literature emphasises on the features of luxury hotels, indicates somehow the lack of studies exploring features enhancing customer experience in budget accommodation, as for instance, hostels.

## 2.5 The hostels market

This section intends to understand the uprising of hostels, explaining their historic fundamentals, exploring the characteristics that turn them into a 'cool' type of tourist accommodation and revealing a definition of hostel, based on contemporary industry underpinnings. This chapter also describes the actual panorama of the hostelling industry worldwide, in terms of establishments, bed supply, revenue, bookings, and major destinations trends.

### Glossary

- **Hostel** - establishment that offer affordable tourist accommodation with a unique social environment;
- **Hostelling**- the practice to stay in hostels when travelling;
- **Hosteller** – a person who stays at hostels.

On the other hand, under the demand perspective, this chapter intends to understand the hostel demand conceptualisation, their motivations and behaviour. For this, first, it is approached the relationship between backpackers and hostels, explaining backpacker's origins, characteristics and new profiling. Then, it is delineated the emerging concept of hostellers, approaching their motivations, behaviour and preferences in terms of hostel-stay.



### *2.5.1 The history of hostels*

Hostels are considered a relatively recent phenomenon in the hospitality industry. Hostelling movement started in 1909, in Germany, as an initiative of the schoolteacher Richard Schirrmann. He used to organize short-trips to the countryside with the aim to get the students to know the landscapes of their own country and make them regain the contact with nature. In those field trips, they used to stay in farms or barns, but the well-being and health of those who were in his care was a concern for Schirrmann (Volante, 2011). He saw the need for overnight accommodation that would allow school children the chance to travel and experience other parts of their country safely and affordably priced, thus in 1912 he created the first “Jugendherberge”, the youth hostel (Hostelling International, 2011).

This first hostel (that is still in operation) was located in an old castle in Altena, Germany, near the school Schirrmann used to teach. Soon, the idea spread throughout the country and at the end of the same year, Germany had already 140 hostels in operation. In the following year, that number duplicated, spreading the concept to other European countries. In 1932, countries such as Poland, Netherlands, France, England and Switzerland opened over 600 youth hostels (Volante, 2011), and as the interest was increasing, in that year, representatives from 11 associations within Europe, founded the International Youth Hostel Federation (IYHF).

In the Second World War period, the hostelling movement suffered a stagnation in Europe, although the firsts hostels appeared in North America. First in the USA, in 1934, then in Canada in 1938. In 1947, after the war, international working groups were formed to reconstruct the old buildings and construct new units, replacing the ones destroyed after bombardments.

Sometime later, Latin America joined the idea at the time of the hostels opened in Argentina (1956), in Uruguay (1958) and in Brazil (1961), turning hostelling into a global movement (Satyro and Pinheiro, 2006; Volante, 2011). Then, what used to be the IYHF, turned into Hostelling International, a non- profit organisation that nowadays holds 90 Youth Hostel Associations in over 90 countries around the world, counting 4,000 hostels worldwide and 4 million hostelling international members globally (Hostelling International, 2017).

### *2.5.2 What is a hostel?*

In some countries, the word hostel refers to student accommodation or long-term accommodation for drug addicts or the homeless, however in hospitality, it has been popularized as a term used to describe a specific lodge, also referred as youth hostels (Hostel management, 2016).

Hostels derives from the traditional youth hostels, created over 100 years ago. In that time, hostels were a hosting system, permanently open to groups of travellers, using empty, unused buildings for this purpose such as schools and castles (Volante, 2011). Also, for general maintenance within the hostel, the norm was doing chores around the hostel during the stay, so hostellers helped with reception duties, cleaning, cooking and either creating a great community spirit (Hostelling International, 2011).

Hostels changed over time but maintained some characteristics. According to Hostelling International (2017) a hostel is: "a good quality budget accommodation that offers a comfortable night's sleep in a friendly atmosphere at an affordable price. Hostels also provide the perfect way to get to know a country at low cost and meet many like-minded travellers while using the communal facilities".

Hostels are an accommodation that offers shared facilities and by the concept, have the communal environment as the main characteristic (Andrade, 2014; Satyro and Pinheiro, 2006). It is consensual that to be considered a hostel, the property must provide short-term, shared (dormitory-style) accommodation for individual travellers, even though many hostels also provide private rooms (Hostelmanagement, 2016).

The term hostel attempts to embody the hybrid product that combines hotel services with the informality and friendliness of a hostel (HVS, 2013), but they differ from hotels mainly in two aspects. Firstly, the accommodation unit to sell isn't typically the room (as the hotels), but the beds. Secondly, hostels offer communal facilities that promote interactions, differently from most hotels, that cherish for privacy and discretion.

Radha (2015) affirms that a hostel accommodation is purposely designed to provide the type of environment that fosters communication and interaction between customers, turning into an ideal place to meet new people (Hostelling International, 2017). Hostels are typically provided with dormitory-type rooms, shared washrooms, self-catering kitchen, bar, restaurant, living room, thus offering less privacy but more opportunity for social interaction.

Hostels also offer many facilities like laundry machine, Wi-Fi, lockers, and usually, the staff is multicultural, sensitive to different cultural aspects and able to speak many languages (Satyro and Pinheiro, 2006). Hostels can be considered more than an accommodation but also a platform to leisure, recreation and other ways of customer satisfaction Butler & Hannam (2013), and most of them offer several additional services such as activity tours, discounts on attractions and shows and the advice of local staff.

It is also consensual that hostels are a budget accommodation (Papis, 2006; Satyro and Pinheiro, 2006, HVS, 2013), and this is one of the most important aspects to characterize them. Therefore, it is possible to summarize some basics that hostels may offer:

- a social atmosphere;
- an affordable price;
- communal facilities, necessarily including shared rooms.

Hostels are a category of tourist accommodation that offer lodging with communal facilities for an affordable price in a unique social environment. Hostels may offer also a wide range of accommodation as private rooms, but must offer communal facilities as shared rooms, bathrooms, and self-catering kitchen.

Thus, in this thesis it is considered that:

Hostels are a category of tourist accommodation that offer lodging with communal facilities for an affordable price in a unique social environment. Hostels may offer also a wide range of accommodation as private rooms, but must offer communal facilities as shared rooms, bathrooms, and self-catering kitchen.

### *2.5.3 Who stays at hostels? Traditional and contemporary profiles*

Hostels have been driven by multiple nuances in the tourism industry over the last 100 years. They started as a part of the student movement in the 1900s and expanded after the Second World War with the strengthening of the youth movement. In the 1960s - 1970s, with the emergence of hippie contra-culture and the concept of backpackers, hostels were also known as backpackers hostels, once those long-term travellers used them as a budget alternative of travel-stay. But especially in the last 15 years, the rapid changes in the tourism industry and the advance of technology brought new profiles of customers to hostels.

#### **2.5.3.1 Backpackers**

##### *2.5.3.1.1 The origins of backpacking*

Since ancient civilizations, humanity's needs to discover, to conquer and to explore, shaped the world as we know it. Journeys were present in the history of many civilizations (Romans, Greeks, Chinese, Jewish...); princes, priests, warriors, merchants and explorers were forged over travel. In western civilizations, Greeks were the first to report epic journeys and people's travels had significances of understanding the world, gaining knowledge and forging adventurers and strong heroes.

Long- term trips and the seek for adventure and discovery also forged the profile of young travellers as in most of these historical journeys, young people were protagonists of migrations and myths. In primary travel trips, a time called prototourism, or as the time before of commercial trips, young people built marks in travel history, as for instance, Hellenistic's heroes, or Marco Polo and his journey to the East (approximately 1271) at age seventeen.

In the post classical period, the Western Europe along their colonial and imperial conquer, collected chronics, maps, journals and literature of traveling to distant lands, such as the Americas, Africa and Middle East. On that time, travel generated stories and

myths, lived and imagined memories that shaped the memorial heritage of humanity (Trigo, 2013)

But it was in the times of the Grand Tour, in the Victorian period (XVII and XVIII), when it was delineated a sample of what would be the youth tourism. At that time, young men went in journeys searching for adventures and to experience the exotic and unknown in distant and non-conventional countries. These journeys were considered as a stage of formal education giving young men the opportunity to increment their sophistication and social abilities (Loker- Murphy & Pearce, 1995).

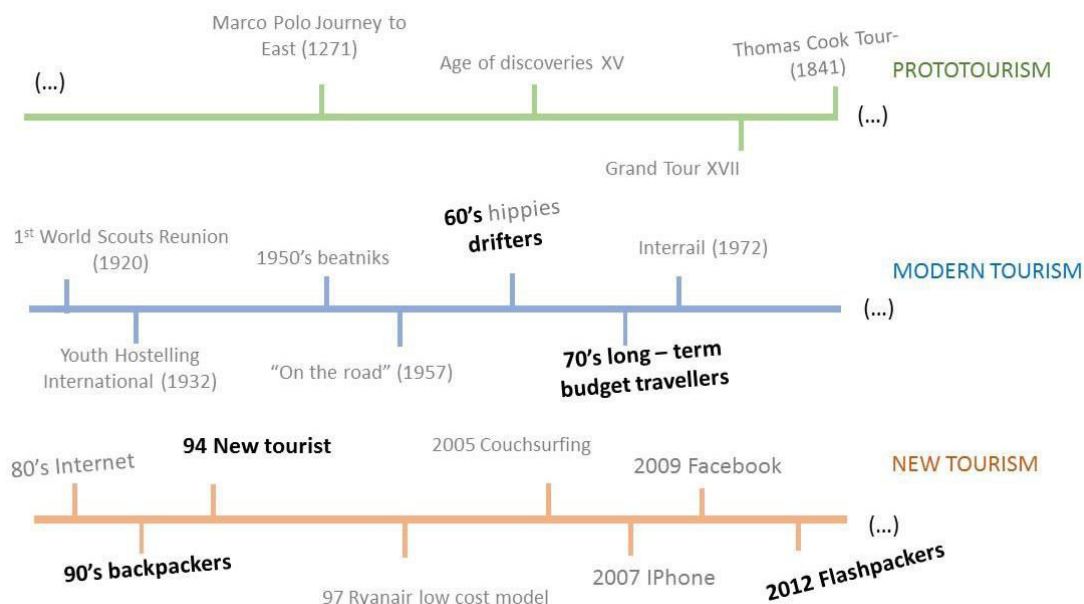
After the Grand Tour, in mid1800's, some companies sold the firsts planned trips. First, the Portuguese travel agency, Abreu, in 1840, sold tickets for the Portuguese to know the 'new world' (Brazil, Portuguese former colony) (Costa, Panyik & Buhalis, 2014). Then in 1841, Thomas Cook started to organize his tours, for the English, which is considered the beginning mark of modern tourism (Trigo, 2013).

In the nineteenth century, travelling was associated with long travels of young men searching for work. This period represented a ritual of separation of young men, and their home and families. That process offered opportunities to tours, adventure and education. At that same period, the Youth Movement emerged as a reaction of social and life conditions in the industrial cities of Europe, as at that time young people started to discover the beauty of local regions through the Youth Associations. These associations offered a travel escape for the countryside, cultural activities and a type of cheap accommodation. Soon, the idea of scouts, youth hostels and take rides, rapidly grew a habit among young people, mainly after the first World Scouts reunion in 1920, and the creation of the Youth Hostelling International in 1932 (Loker- Murphy & Pearce, 1995).

After the Second Great War, the economic depression and youth unemployment totally changed the way people used to travel. For some young people, living on the road became a habit, turning it into a way of living, while for others more than a way of living, travel was part of a lifestyle and a type of transgression and non-conformism. In the 50's, the beatnik movement (artists and hedonists young Americans willing to live as modern nomads) boomed and materialized through Kerouac novel "On the road" that narrates the story of two young boys that crossed the United States in a road trip searching for creativity, drugs and sex. Beatniks were followed by hippie contra-culture, at middle 60's, delineating what would be the concept of backpackers (Paris, 2010).

Cohen (2011) adds that the origin of backpacker's dates to the 1960-70's, in a time where the act of backpacking was considered a marginal activity undertaken by society's drop-outs. O'Reilly (2006) explains that the term backpacker is relatively recent, and it had its first description in 1973, when Cohen designated drifters as a term that remains the origin of backpacker's. After that, Riley (1988 in O'Reilly, 2006) settled on "international long-term budget travellers", but then after the 90's, the term backpacker was popularized in literature. With the globalization of tourism and the increasing of independently organized trips, the drifter ideal became in the past and backpacker's tourism turned mainstream (O'Reilly, 2006).

In 1972, Cohen predicted an increasing in types of tourists, mentioning that some wanted to run away from mass tourism, including in this group explorers and drifters. Explorers were the ones who arranged their trip alone and tried to get off the beaten track as much as they could, but somehow, they try to plan their steps. In the other hand, drifters had no fixed itinerary, or timetable and had no well-defined goals of travel.



\*Some events are based on their popularization date, not in their real happening or creation.

Figure 23 Timeline of backpackers' concept development

Walton (2009) in his research of tourism in travel history evolution stresses that the great increase of tourism as we know it occurred in the 1960's when the globalization and massification of tourism was pronounced. The author prospects that the development of purpose-built corporate resorts has proceeded in step with the expansion and increasing sophistication of 'backpacker' and 'sustainable' tourism, which has left the ideal of the 'off the beaten track' traveller increasingly difficult to achieve. But current studies also point out that it is in the impoverishment of mass tourism model that a new market and profile of backpacker emerge.

In the new century, the search for a non-massive tourism upsurge with the facilities of technology revolution. If in one hand travellers search for involvement, connection with locals, and self-discovering, on the other hand, the new technologies and innovation in tourism enable travellers to gather information and to reach multiple and accessible services. Poon (1994) describes those more informed, more independent and more involved, as the new tourists.

In the last 20 years, the rapidly change of technology influenced the way people travel. Nowadays, travellers are connected in all phases of the trip (before, during, after) and social media, portability, mobile technology and low - cost services turned tourism easy and accessible, connecting a lot of people around the globe. In this context, backpacking culture was also affected, influencing a new demand of backpackers. Paris (2010, 2012) defines these technology-based travellers as flashpackers. They are generally older,

travel as backpacker by choice rather than budgetary necessity and their tourist experience is mediated by communications technology, mainly, through mobile devices.

#### *2.5.3.1.2 Traditional backpackers*

The term "backpackers" has been used to describe tourists who are mostly young travellers, budget conscious and prepared for long-term trips (Chitty, Ward and Chua, 2007). As defined per Loker- Murphy and Pearce (1995, p. 831): "Backpackers are travellers who exhibit a preference for budget accommodation; an emphasis on meeting other people; an independently organized and flexible travel schedule - longer rather than brief holidays; and an emphasis on informal and participatory recreation activities."

From the increasing competition in tourism market emerges the opportunity for destinations to focus on backpackers and youth tourism. Countries such as Australia have already given importance to consolidate the backpackers market, while emergent tourism destinations such as South Africa and Asian countries (China and Malaysia for example) are investing in their potential. This way, the backpacker's scene became an essential part of the tourism economy, and the increasing of this form of tourism has boosted the supply of facilities, including hostels as the representation of their preferred lodgings (Wilson & Richards, 2008).

Although backpackers became a popularized term, there is a divergence in literature about concept and definitions (Nash, Tyne and Davies, 2006), however, some characteristics can be grouped and highlighted (table 8):

Table 8 Backpacker's characteristics

<b><i>Backpacker's characteristics</i></b>	<b><i>Authors</i></b>
Young (under 30 years old)	Chitty et al (2007)
Budget limited	Hampton (1998); Chitty et al (2007)
Stay long periods in a destination	Loker- Murphy and Pearce (1995); Chitty et al (2007)
Visit multiple destinations	Nash, Tyne and Davies (2006); Musa and Thirumoorthi (2011);
Emphasis on interactions with people	Loker- Murphy and Pearce (1995); Noy (2004); Nash, Thyne and Davies (2006);
Independently organized trips	Nash, Tyne and Davies (2006)
Flexible travel schedule	Nash, Tyne and Davies (2006); Musa and Thirumoorthi (2011)
Use Internet as information source	Sorensen (2003); Nash, Thyne and Davies (2006)
Preference for budget accommodation	Loker- Murphy and Pearce (1995); (it continues) Nash, Thyne and Davies (2006)
Preference for local services and enterprises	Scheyvens (2002); Visser (2004); Maoz (2007); Musa and Thirumoorthi (2011);

These tourists usually stay for long periods of time, having long-term trips for multiple destinations but mostly with flexible travel schedule (Musa & Thirumoorthi, 2011; Nash, Tyne & Davies 2006). They also search for an escape of day by day life and the pressures of work, career and other responsibilities (Sorensen, 2003).

They are budget- limited (Hampton, 1998) and have preference for budget accommodation and local services and activities (Nash, Tyne & Davies, 2006). Also, according to Nash, Tyne and Davies (2006) backpackers used to organize their own trips, and most of their travel destination choices are made through guidebooks and the internet (Sorensen, 2003), whereas internet keeps increasing in importance as the information source for backpackers (Nash, Tyne & Davies, 2006).

They have the necessity to interact with other backpackers and meet other travellers (Nash, Tyne & Davies, 2006). They expect to share experiences and meet new cultures through these interactions, even though most of backpacker's local culture interactions are done with front office tourism workers (Sorensen, 2003). Backpackers have a great sense of sociability and they are constantly narrating their trips and discussing with others about the best places to visit. Because of that a great deal of information is passed on via word-of-mouth, with storytelling as an important factor (Noy, 2004).

Maoz (2007) add that backpacker's recreational activities are likely to focus around nature, culture or adventure and they make an effort to look like locals. Backpacker's tourism has also the power to benefit local enterprises, mainly for disadvantaged areas and has a multiplier effect to the local economy (Musa & Thirumoorthi, 2011), because even though backpackers spend less per day, they spend more money in the whole trip (Hecht & Martin, 2006). Scheyvens (2002) study is based on the theory that backpacker's tourism can promote local development in third world economies because communities can provide services and products, demanded by these tourists without the need for large amounts of start capital or sophisticated infrastructure, thus they can retain control over such enterprises.

Backpackers discussions are gaining so much importance that even some authors as Hampton (1998) argue that this tourism can be an alternative to mass tourism and development to emerging tourism destinations, whereas in the local economy, the encouragement of responsible tourism has the potential of alleviating some of the perceived excesses of the industry. Visser (2004) states that backpackers are responsible to local development when they generally choose local activities and establishments (restaurants, accommodation and transport) and reach new spots generating income and employment in less frequently visited destinations.

Pearce & Foster (2007) assume that backpackers travel experiences develop a series of skill attributes in one's life, such as: dealing with pressure, emotions and stress, self-confidence, teamwork and risk-taking. Through their analysis they identified four types of backpackers, the ones: who travel to develop self, to experience country and cultures, who travel for social aspects (socialize, play, party), and the ones who travel to escape. That is why, for the authors, backpacking is a kind of university of travel that enriches educational opportunities and skill development.

The role of cross-cultural aspects in backpacker's motivations is also important and with the actual tourism dynamics it's necessary to understand a group of characteristics, but not be limited by them. As stated in Maoz (2007) each tourist has individual characteristics and expectations and backpackers are more diverse and multifaceted than ever, engaging in a variety of social and recreational activities and not being similar in motivations, nationality and cultural background, age, gender, and class.

#### *2.5.3.1.3 New backpackers*

Although most of authors try to limit backpackers into a defined and homogeneous category, new backpackers may diverge by age, motivations, behaviour and purposes (Maoz, 2007; Hecht & Martin, 2006; Loker-Murphy and Pearce, 1995), but they mostly converge into the identity of being and feeling as a backpacker.

Nowadays, to be a backpacker is more of a socially constructed identity than a clearly defined category; it is more about a self-definition than a set of description (Sorensen, 2003). With the popularization of backpacking's mode of travel, the significance of the experience for most of these individuals seems not to have diminished with the increasingly nature of activity. In other words, even with the increasing number of people travelling around, the essence of backpacking, as enriching experiences seems to be preserved. In this mode, concepts are flowing, being reshaped, and turning issues as: ageing, technology, lifestyle and experiences crucial to understand the new tourism demand in the contemporary world

#### *- Ageing and the Peter-Pan Syndrome*

Although most of authors state that backpackers are the youngest, Hecht & Martin (2006) consider that there are two main types of backpackers: the young backpacker, and the contemporary backpacker. The young backpacker (tourists between 15 and 25 years old) is the conventional type of backpackers, those who view backpacking more as a social and cultural experience.

***Are all backpackers young?***

***Am I a backpacker just for staying in a hostel?***

***Am I not a backpacker if I carry a wheel bag?***

But from 26 they pass to a transition period, reaching the concept of contemporary backpackers (tourist above 30 years old) that are incrementing youth tourism. But with age comes new habits and behaviour, for instance according to Hecht & Martin (2006) as older they are, the desire and willingness to pay for privacy increase, reflecting in new types of services to satisfy their needs.

Authors highlight that nowadays people above 30 years old could be also considered young. The after 30's is considered a second youth or as mentioned by Loker-Murphy & Pearce (1995) people are experiencing the Peter pan syndrome. This is a concept



imported from psychology<sup>1</sup>, and refers to those who doesn't want to "grow up" or individuals that are socially immature.

What should be considered is that youth tourism goes beyond the age group and is really defined through the identification with the group and the lifestyle. Loker-Murphy & Pearce (1995) also highlight that even the baby boomers are discovering hostels service and backpacking, what in this context can enlarge the dimension of youth and backpackers market.

For sure, it is common to see plus 40 people in hostels travelling by their own, or even couples with kids travelling with backpacks, so by these examples several scenarios can be pictured. Firstly, people are getting married later and living more individual lives, usually delaying some lifecycles of traditional adulthood. Then, those who were young backpackers and now are after 30's, keep on going in the backpacking travel style, even with some adaptations. And finally, elders are discovering new ways of travelling, proving that demographic age is not as important as the youth of spirit. confirming

- *Technology-mediated travel*

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's) gave new travellers the power to be better informed and to have autonomy to plan their own journey. Either, nowadays is easier to contact local enterprises directly, as communication is at a click's distance. Paris (2010) states that backpackers use to be connected in all the stages of travel (pre, during, post) and even for the less technology-geeks, technology is mandatory at least at some point of the trip.

Prior trip, backpackers gain information by visiting informational websites, other backpacker's personal blogs, virtual communities and through virtual interactions with personal networks composed of friends, family, and other travellers. Many also book travel online and specifically hostel accommodations prior departure.

During the trip, backpackers use technologies, mainly emails and social networking sites, to maintain virtual proximity with family and friends and to enhance corporal mobility while travelling. Considering this, they prefer accommodation that have free internet with Wi-Fi access.

Post trip backpacker's want to enhance and maintain their virtual identity by interacting with backpacker culture. They maintain contact and social interactions by posting photos, posting in blogs, backpacker's forums and by adding in social networks friends made while travelling to social networks.

Technology is affecting backpackers' culture once it provides spaces for reporting and reflecting on actual experiences whilst travelling (Young and Hanley, 2010). These media are used by backpackers prior-trip, on-trip and post-trip, allowing travel to be expressed in a range of online texts, such as: emails, travel weblogs, and social networking sites.

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<sup>1</sup> It is a concept accepted in psychology since the publication of a book written in 1983 The Peter Pan Syndrome: Men Who Have Never Grown Up or "Never Growing Man Syndrome", written by Dr. Dan Kiley. However, it is not referenced in the manuals of mental disorders (Wikipedia, 2017).

- *Travel as a lifestyle and a way of living*

Technology is turning the division between home and away less important, whether it makes possible the mobility and proximity among social life, home life and work life. This mobility is also an exchange to travel whether the profusion of information and facilities with service providers turned independent travel much easier (Paris 2010). O'Regan (2008, p.111) adds:

"...travellers can now manage multiple lifestyles (travel, work, home) while on the move - a type of traveller that couldn't exist 20 years ago, in the age before Internet cafés, mid-career breaks, mobile phones, work and family obligations and backpacker infrastructure."

The rapid progression of technology turned to less important things that were discussed just a few years ago. In a not distant past, O'regan (2008) used to discuss the "emergence" of internet cafés relating them with the backpacker's world. At that time, internet cafés became popular as an alternative to work remotely and a possibility to access internet outside the traditional working space. However, nowadays, with the easiness of Wi-Fi it is possible to work everywhere and worldwide, just with a PC and sometimes only with a mobile. In this mode, technology keeps pressing the market to fulfil travellers' demand and necessity to communicate in a hypermobile lifestyle.

For instance, for many millennials to work remotely is already a reality, turning the possibility of travelling while working into a broader experience. Those people, known as digital nomads choose to work while enjoying the traveller lifestyle, increasing the demand for communal spaces (co-working) and uprising new travel careers as bloggers (Bosangit, Dulnuan &Mena, 2012). Many of them making travelling as their full-time job. In this way, travel is gaining more importance in people's every day's lives and can be considered for some as part of their lifestyle, and to others as a culture, a way of living.

- *The search for meaningful experiences*

The pressures of post-modern world joint with facilities of travel industry are giving new significances to travel's role in people's lives. But, if in one hand travellers take advantage of these modern facilities, on the other hand, they want to live their travel experiences, creating representations of themselves and the others. But, this is not a new phenomenon. Since first human migrations, travelling journeys were motivated by a search of experiences, of adventure, learning, exploring and self-indulgence. As explains Galani- Moutafi (2000, p.204):

"Passing through different locations and crossing personal and cultural boundaries, explorers, missionaries, colonial officers, military personnel, migrants, emigrants, exiles, domestic servants, anthropologists, and tourists have their own travel histories."

Nowadays, the actual consumption market bombards one's life with all types of services, and products. At the same time people have easy access to many ways of consumption, that do not seem to be enough. Pine and Gilmore (1999, p.163) explains:

"But what people really want after they enter into all these pursuits? Experiences, yes. But there is more than that: we want to transform ourselves to become different. Individuals want something more lasting than a memory, something beyond what any good, service or experience alone can offer."

Tourism is an experiential business by rigor, and beyond experiential consumption, it carries the inner potential of personal changing, turning into a valuable tool to a new profile of travellers. Accordingly, backpackers, through tourism consumption, want to live memorable experiences for life, as they see in experienced- based journeys (travel) as a way to live meaningful and transformational experiences; they search for meaningful and enrich encounters.

This brief literature review leads to a new and multi-faceted demand that should be explored in tourism research. Backpackers profile is gaining new shapes but some trends can be highlighted, as they/their:

- Follow new concepts of youth (20-40 or more years old);
- Consider travel as part of their lifestyle, setting it as a life priority;
- Travel is technology-mediated (post, during, after travel);
- Search for meaningful experiences.

### 2.5.3.2 Youth tourism and Millennials

"We see millennial travelers more as explorers than tourists."

**Brian McGuinness, Global brand leader, Starwood's.**

The strong growth of hostels industry has been spurred by millennial travellers (aged 18-35). Seeking to spend more money on longer trips and see as much of the world as possible, millennials are prioritizing social interactions and shared adventures with newfound friends versus the average traveller population (Hostelworld, 2016a). Millennials are now spending more of their income on 'experiences'

and travel is a key component for them. The World Tourism Association (UNWTO, 2016) forecast that by 2020 there will be almost 300 million international youth trips per year, almost 60 per cent higher than the numbers seen in 2010 and this part of the travel industry is growing faster than global travel overall (Hickey, 2017).

Millennials, also known as generation Y can be considered as the ones born between 1980s and 2000s. They differ from previous generations (X and baby boomers) by their lifestyle and behaviour and are disrupting many social and economic dimensions. Millennials are redefining social, political, demographic, technological and economic fabric worldwide and increasing their presence and clout in the marketplace and workplace (Garikapati, Pendyala, Morris, Mokhtarian & McDonald, 2016). Considering this scenario, it is not surprising that considerable attention is being paid to millennials' priorities, lifestyle preferences, technology adoption, activity, housing choices, and of course travel behaviour.

They are the most educated generation ever - in terms of formal education (McDonald, 2015). They were born and raised in the Internet era and compared to their parents and grandpas they exhibit a lag in some lifecycle activities. Millennials use to delay completing education, getting jobs, marrying and having children. Also, they are redefining the baby boomer's dream by not valuing home and car ownership, a steady job, traditional family,

instead they have purpose-driven life to make a difference in the society (Garikapati et al, 2016), and prefer to consume 'experiences', as for instance going on a dream holiday (Expedia, 2016).

Millennials are also called, the frugal generation (O'Connell, 2015, in Garikapati et al, 2016) with respect to their spending habits or the "go-nowhere" generation (Buchholz & Buchholz, 2012 in Garikapati et al, 2016) because of their activities and travel patterns. Although they are considered lazy, entitled, narcissistic, digitally obsessed, and spendthrifts, they can be conservative in terms of spending habits. According to the UBS Report (2014), as they saw their parents' retirement and investing plans disrupted by market volatility, millennials seem sceptical about long-term investing, while optimistic about their abilities to achieve goals and their financial futures.

Sometimes called "the cheap generation", they truly search for cheap promotions, but they spend less money at most times. For instance, a report of TD Bank (2016) indicates that millennials used to eat out more times, compared to Generation X and Baby Boomers, however they spend less than others. In this mode, it seems that is not that they are not worried about spending, they just have different perspective about money purposes in one's life.

In terms of travel, most of studies mention transportation habits. As such, because Millennials do not pursue buying a car, they reduce levels of driving and their time on-daily travel (Garikapati et al, 2016; Ralph, 2016, Ralph *et al*, 2016, McDonald, 2015, Polzin *et al*, 2014). Also, millennials are growing in the demand for urban living because for a variety of quality-of-life reasons, they want to live in communities where they can walk, bike and use public transportation. Accordingly, they are taking conventional trains, riding buses and sharing cars and bikes (Kamga, 2015).

Most of the current research is regarding the relations between millennials and technology and as they are the firstly "digitally native" generation, studies try to find some correlation with it (Bolton, Parasuraman, Hoefnagels, Migchels, Kabadayi, Gruber, Loureiro & Solnet, 2013; Nusair; Bilgihan; Okumus & Cobanoglu, 2013; Mangold & Smith, 2012; Nussair, Parsa & Cobanoglu, 2011). Millennials feel comfortable using ICT's and consequently are more involved in such online activities as text messaging, social networks, podcasts, and blogs. Also, millennials have traditionally been viewed as the innovators and early adopters of technology, including online reviews and other social media venues and in consumer behaviour terms, they pushed generation X'ers and baby boomers to adopt technology and online information sources. (Mangold & Smith, 2012). Still, for millennial's generation the online field has pushed social network to another level, because in social media they build relationships with people who share similar interests and in whom they trust (Nusair et al, 2013).

Social dimension is very important to their lives, according to Parment (2013) millennials show a strong tendency to self-profile and express their desired views of self through the way they consume. That is why the social environment's reaction to their consumption is crucial to how the person succeeds in profiling himself in the social environment. Millennials are very interactive and able to share experiences (Nusair *et al*, 2013), especially in social media. Even though, according to UBS Report (2014) when

making a financial decision, Millennials are no more self-directed than other generations, they look for face-to-face advice from people they trust and who listen to them, as for instance, family or a family-referred professional.

Millennials are usually bombarded in infinite consumption ways and have multiple leisure options. This way, they tend to trust in their peer-fellow's suggestions, as for instance, in the study of Bednall et al (2012) which indicate that the presence of friends influence the attendance in sports games. Millennials have grown up with more leisure options than ever before and tend to spend available funds on leisure (Bednall et al, 2012). According to Millennial Traveller Expedia Report (2016), 72% of millennials prefer to go on a dream holiday than to buy a brand new car (65%) which could be considered a shift with previous generation's paradigms. Millennials have different perspectives regarding work and social obligations, they were born in a society where technology turned the division between home and away less important, so nowadays, as travellers, they can manage multiple lifestyles (travel, work, home) while on the move O'Regan (2008).

In terms of tourism services, millennials are very budget-oriented. It is not that they just prefer cheaper services but they usually search for a good value for money in services. For instance, according to Millennial Traveller WYSE TC Report (2015) they would endure standing on a flight for a discount and choose travel agents and tour operators by the price. However, when they think about personalized versus budget services, there must be a balance, where personalised services extend beyond price sensitivity (Expedia, 2016).

As digitally native, millennials use technology as part of their travel experience and to communicate with a global audience. They are highly active social media users, thus social media represent an integral part of the travel experience and they usually use it to share their trip. They are highly influenced by friend's suggestions and experiences, and when they travel they prefer to go with friends or alone, rather than with family or partner (Expedia, 2016).

Millennials are avid to pursue an international experience, for this they travel – beyond holidays - to study, to volunteer, to engage in part-time work or learn a foreign language. Millennials search for meaningful experiences, an authentic destination and appreciate a "living like a local" and independent trip. They, in general, venture independently to further places, stay longer and immerse in other cultures to build their life experiences, explore more remote destinations and spend less time in major cities (UNWTO, 2016; Expedia, 2016; WYSE TC, 2015).

### 2.5.3.3 Hostellers

The new travellers require a set of offerings and facilities, hostels, apps, cultural events and innovative and budget services. It implies that businesses in the tourism industry should be aware of these new demand requirements, investing in experience-based services, online presence and following millennials lifestyle. As part of this emerging

offering, it is important for hostels to consider which profile of customer they are attending to.

For long, hostels have become the representation of backpacker's and young travellers (Wilson & Richards, 2008), and while those segments gained importance in tourism, hostels surfed in their rise. However, nowadays, **calling them as youth or backpackers hostels is falling into disuse**, firstly because most hostels accept all ages and welcome all types of travellers (not only backpackers) and secondly because they are establishing as a well-known and profitable industry in the tourist accommodation sector.

Hostel's travellers are seen as young students who have limited budget, generally adaptable and open-minded (Sun et al, 2014). According to a Hostelworld report (2016a), **millennials represent 70% of total hostels travellers** and 15% of them used a hostel in the last 12 months. Hostel travellers used to spend an important part of their budget on travel. In absolute terms they spend approximately 1100 euros more than other travellers annually and millennials that stayed at hostels spent an average of EUR 1.522 on their last main trip (WYSE TC, 2015).

Beyond this, hostellers consider travel as an important part of their lifestyle and consequently they are more likely to go abroad compared to other leisure travellers. Most of them are solo travellers, seek social connections, and are avid experience seekers. More than 80% said that they travel to collect memories and experience the local culture, as well as experiment with new food and meet other travellers (Hostelworld, 2016a). Differently from Hostelworld report, HVS research indicates that 45% of hostellers are in a group, and 20% are single travellers but there is an increasing demand for couples and families, turning these groups into potential customers.

Many times, in literature the definition of backpackers is mixed with the profile of who stays in hostels but they do not necessarily mean the same. If be a young tourist, carry a backpack or stay in hostels, does not define itself what is a backpacker as well, being budget-limited and young does not describe the contemporary profile of those staying in hostels.

Thereby, in this study, we consider backpacking rather than a category, more of a socially constructed identity (Sorensen, 2003). In accordance, as literature up to now does not approach hostels guests profile apart from backpacker concept, it is approached in this thesis those who usually stay in hostels, as hostellers. Making this concept more comprehensive to achieve one of the goals of the thesis, which is to examine the determinants (contextual, psychographics, demographics, etc.) of a hostel-stay.

### 2.5.4 Contemporary hostel market

Hostels crossed the threshold of backpacker-youth niche to establish as a contemporary traveller- tailored lodge. Nowadays, they differentiate developing new concepts as design hostels, posh hostels and reaching new niches (e.g. wine, surf hostels). Their concept is so important in actual hospitality that some hotel chains are getting into hostels market or exporting some elements of hostel's concept to the traditional hotelier.

For instance, in 2016, Europe's largest hotel group, Accor, launched its hostel brand (Joe & Joe) planning to open fifty units until 2020 (Vidalon, 2016). Also, Hilton is considering launching a new chain of budget "hostel-like" hotels marketed at millennials (Neate, 2016), while other hotel chains, such as Starwood and Marriot already launched new brands that are tailored for millennials investing in design, technology and experiences (Trejos, 2016). Accordingly, new concepts as boutique and lifestyle<sup>2</sup> hotels emerge as an alternative to traditional hotels to please new travellers (Jones, Day & Felitti, 2013). This scenario brings more and more different types of dynamics into the lodging panorama, turning the future of hospitality a challenge to be unveiled.

*"It's outstanding how much the hostel industry has transformed in the last five years alone. Today, we're seeing hostel accommodations that are offering the perfect balance of privacy, amenities and social activities."* **Feargal Mooney, Hostelworld CEO.**

The new phase of hostelling was boosted mainly by private hostels and their capacity of innovation and to reach new tourism guidelines Andrade (2014). Hostel's history has always been related with youth associations and although these hostels are still a large slice of the market<sup>3</sup>, the private ones are those enlarging and significantly changing that market in the last 10 years.

Andrade (2014) defines that there are two types of hostels: the non-profit, generally associated to Youth Associations and the private ones, which like any other enterprise, focus on profits. Nowadays, there are a sort of hostels chains, new concepts and niches that make hostels, especially in Europe, to highlight by their quality and capacity to provide what new traveller's wish for. Although hostels are still known as low-cost services, the image of being budget lodges in bad conditions of cleanliness and comfort is changing:

"Youth hostelling, similarly to any other area of human life, is evolving. The notion that hostels are small, rundown buildings with smelly dormitories crammed with bunk-beds and allocentric, adventure-seeking travellers is nowadays far from the norm. Hostels are some of the few places where large groups with limited budgets can be catered for." (Papis, 2006, p.2)

<sup>2</sup> Lifestyle hotel is a property that combines living elements and activities into functional design that gives guests the opportunity to explore the experience they desire. (Boutique and Lifestyle Lodging Association, 2017)

<sup>3</sup> Hostelling International keeps maintain its importance, counting 4,000 hostels worldwide and 4 million hostelling international members globally

The turnover on hostel's market happened in the end of the XX century. The increasing number of travellers and the accessibility to destinations, also increased the demand for low budget accommodation. In this context hostels started to highlight by their good-value for money, getting to the knowledge of a broader group. After that, XXI century challenges brought hostelling industry into a new revolution. It started professionalizing (Papis, 2006), and guided by millennials preferences (Hostelworld, 2016a) and modern tourism dynamics, they are making increasing efforts to establishing in hospitality market and staging superior stay-experience to their guests.

The **hostel industry** is currently **valued at \$5.2 billion in bed revenue** and is projected **to grow seven to eight percent year-over-year**. This strong growth has been spurred by millennial travellers (aged 18-35). Seeking to spend more money on longer trips and see as much of the world as possible, millennials are prioritizing social interactions and shared adventures with newfound friends versus the average traveller population (Hostelworld, 2016a).

Millennials are now spending more of their income on 'experiences' and travel is a key component for them. The World Tourism Association (UNWTO, 2016) forecasts that by 2020 there will be almost 300 million international youth trips per year, almost 60 per cent higher than the numbers seen in 2010 and this part of the travel industry is growing faster than global travel overall (Hickey, 2017).

Firstly hostels were created as a place for students to stay in educational trips and from the first beginnings were turned to youth tourists and traditional backpackers. However, since that time, hostel market has been increasing and diversifying their services. **If for a long-time hostels were known by their low fare and low quality in services, nowadays this scenario is changing.** Posh hostels, design hostels, eco-hostels are several examples that show how they are leaving the low-quality stigma behind to positioning as a "cool" type of accommodation that not only fit the traditional budget-minded backpackers but a broader set of contemporary travellers.

Although the first hostel was inaugurated more than 100 years ago, **hostelling** can be still considered a **new business**. According to Hostelworld (2016a) **just 4 in 10 hostels** in developed markets **have been in business for more than 10 years**, number that decreases for just 1 in 10 hostels in emerging markets. The **'cost' appeal** of hostels has been one of the key drivers of its expansion in the wake of the 2007/8 financial crisis. Indeed **the appeal for local involvement** is another driver of hostels boom. According to European Tourist Hostel Report (Savills, 2016), travellers are increasingly looking for something different and more 'local' than what hotels can offer and it is in this gap that hostels can keep flourishing.

Unlike hostels of the past, today, **9 in 10 have private rooms**, and keep pleasing customers with other sort of accommodation such as: male and female separate rooms and ensuite rooms. In addition to dorm rooms or traditional shared rooms, contemporary hostels offer a set of additional services and activities, providing guests with plenty of options based on their requirements.



For hostels, **online travel agencies (OTAs) represent** most of all bookings. As most of hostels have online presence, the OTAs are driving the sector, holding **70% of hostel bookings** compared with 40% of hotel gross bookings globally (Hostelworld, 2016a). Hostelworld is the leading market share for hostel bookings, followed by other OTAs including Hostelbookers, HostelsClub, Booking.com as well as HI Hostels.

Hostel is traditionally a not-for-profit market; however, the sector is undergoing profound change with renewed interest from investors. Those investors see new prospects in hostels for profitability through changes in quality and product offering. The market still consists of small owner-operated assets and Europe's Famous Hostels are associated with individually owned independent hostels (Ariyakula, 2016). However, there is an expansion in branded hostels presence (see table 9).

For instance, recently, Queensgate Investments announced the acquisition of Generator Hostels for around £400 million, TPG Real Estate bought A&O Hotels and Hostels in January 2017 and Accor, one of the world's largest hotel groups, has revealed its own hostel brand Jo & Joe with the first sites set to open in 2018 (Hickey, 2017).

Table 9 Major European Hostel Operators

<i><b>Operator</b></i>	<i><b>N of Hostels</b></i>	<i><b>N of Beds</b></i>
A &O	22	14,000
Meininger	17	7,000
Generator	11	5,000
St. Christopher's Inns	17	2,000
Wombats	6	1,900
Equity Point	9	1,800
Plus Hostels	3	1,100
Hip Hop Hostels, Paris	12	1,000
Euro Hostels, UK	3	900

Source: HVS Research (2013).

The growth in branded hostels is part of the evolution of the wider hospitality sector. In Europe, the branded hostels seem to grow in major urban destinations (table 10) as gateway cities remain significant due to the apparent supply constraints. Despite this, hostel expansion is better suited to those European cities that attract significant numbers of overseas visitors (Savills, 2016).

Table 10 Location of major hostel brands properties

HOSTEL BRANDS	GENERATOR	A & O	MEININGER	ST. CHRISTOPHER INN's	WOMBATS	PLUS	EQUITY POINT
Headquarters	England	Germany	Germany	England	Austria	Italy	Spain
<b>Existing Hostels:</b>							
Stockholm	✓						
Rome	✓						
Amsterdam	✓	✓	✓	✓✓✓			
Paris	✓			✓			
London	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Venice	✓	✓				✓	
Berlin - 2	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓	✓	✓	✓	
Barcelona	✓			✓			✓
Hamburg	✓	✓	✓				
Copenhagen	✓			✓			
Dublin	✓						
Frankfurt		✓	✓✓				
Munich		✓	✓		✓		
Prague		✓		✓		✓	✓
Vienna		✓	✓		✓✓		
Stuttgart		✓					
		Eleven other locations in Germany and Austria	Brussels, Koln and Salzberg	Five other locations in Scotland, Wales, Belgium and England	Budapest	Florence and two locations in Rome	Lisbon & Marrakech

\*Tick marks indicate the number of hostels in each city

Source: HVS Report (Ariyakula, 2016)

**Europe is the biggest market for hostels** (figure 24). However, the highest revenue growth areas are in emerging markets including South and Southeast Asia (13 percent), the Middle East (11 percent), Eastern Europe (11 percent) and Northern Asia -- spearheaded by China - (10 percent). The U.S. (along with Canada) accounts for just three percent of properties and 10 percent of global hostel revenue whereas if we look to global hotel revenue it represents 28 percent of global hotel revenue (Hostelworld, 2016a).

In Europe, Germany, the homeland of hostels, is among the most mature markets with two of Europe's biggest branded operators, A&O and Meringer originating there. From European cities, Berlin emerged as the best supplied market with 11.2 beds per 1,000 youth travellers followed by Barcelona with 5.3 beds per 1,000 youth travellers.

From a growth perspective, London and Paris stand out, mainly because both attract large numbers of overseas visitors. Still they currently have just 2.8 beds and 1.4 beds per 1,000 youth travellers respectively. Similarly, Dublin, Rome and Copenhagen all have fewer than 2.4 beds. Compared to hotels, hostels are still relatively undersupplied. For instance, in the case of London, there are 7.6 hotel rooms per 1,000 overseas visitors, but considering the numbers, a further growth is expected (Savills, 2016).

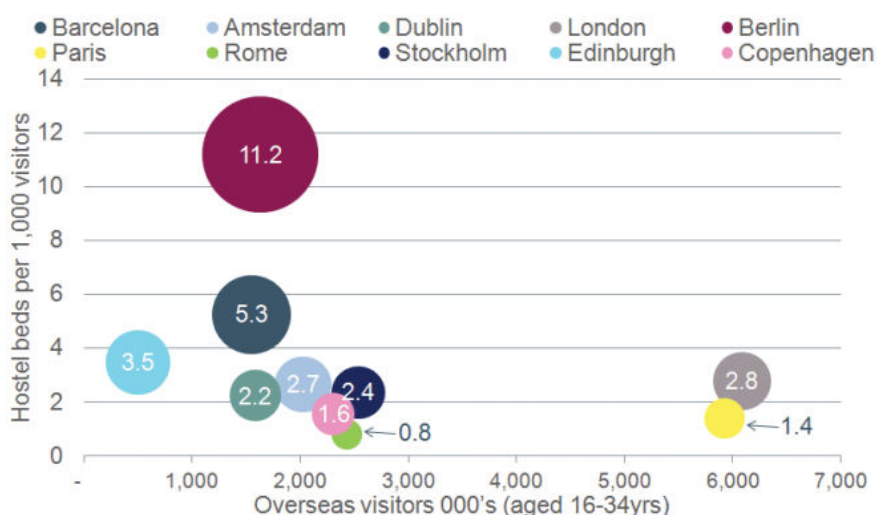


Figure 24 Bed supply relative to youth visitor numbers  
Source: European Tourist Hostel Report (Savills, 2016)

Accordingly, some of the biggest cities in terms of supply, are also the preferred destinations of hostellers. In 2015, Hostelworld used its customer database to report the most visited countries and cities (table 11) of those booking hostels. UK, Spain, Germany, U.S, and Australia appeared as the most visited countries, while London, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin and Paris were preferred cities of hostellers. In this context, Portugal appeared in the 12nd position and Lisbon as the 13rd in hosteller's preference, while Brazil emerged as the 17<sup>th</sup> country, with Rio de Janeiro as the most visited Brazilian city by hostellers

Table 11 Top 20 most visited countries and cities in hosteller's opinion

<i><b>Top 20 most visited countries</b></i>	<i><b>Top 20 most visited cities</b></i>
1. UK	1. London
2. Spain	2. Amsterdam
3. Germany	3. Barcelona
4. U. S	4. Berlin
5. Australia	5. Paris
6. Italy	6. Prague
7. Thailand	7. Dublin
8. France	8. Budapest
9. Netherlands	9. Bangkok
10. Ireland	10. Rome
11. Japan	11. Madrid
12. Portugal	12. Vienna
13. China	13. Lisbon
14. Czech Republic	14. Edinburg
15. New Zealand	15. Munich
16. Vietnam	16. New York
17. Brazil	17. Brussels
18. Croatia	18. Sidney
19. Austria	19. Tokyo
20. Hungary	20. Florence

Source: Meet the world report (Hostelworld, 2015).

Hostels are uprising as an emerging heritage and economic power. While they hold the potential to be a tool for real economic development (Hampton, 1998), they also act in many destinations as a catalyser of urban rehabilitation (Abrantes, 2014).

The industry is mostly carried by independent hostels, they create direct employment and give the opportunity to local entrepreneurs to have a business with low level of capital investment (Visser, 2006). Even though hostels are mainly located in urban areas, in emerging destinations, hostels increase the potential of tourists going to places less frequently visited, generating income and employment for local enterprises Visser (2006). This scenario is also possible in urban destination. Additionally, for economic value, hostels are boosting a new revolution in urban areas, making a strong contribution to the recovery of the constructed heritage, mainly preserving buildings in historic centres (Abrantes, 2014).

### 2.5.5 Why choosing hostels?

There are several elements that may influence guest experience in hostels: price, the communal facilities and the social atmosphere are some points of differentiation, however, other issues such as safety, cleanliness and more recently design/architecture can be also mentioned (table 12):

Table 12 Important features of a hostel

<b><i>Authors</i></b>	<b><i>Applied study</i></b>	<b><i>Important features of a hostel</i></b>
Firth & Hing (1999)	Australia	price, location, services, facilities and eco-friendly practices
Murphy (2001)	Australia	Staff, value for money, cleanliness, social activities, good atmosphere
Papis (2006)	Scotland	Staff
Nash, Thyne & Davies (2006)	Scotland	price, location and being a member of youth hostel association; cleanliness of rooms, value for money; self-catering facilities.
Hecht & Martin (2006)	Canada	Location, cleanliness, price, safety/security; personal services (staff, information services); facilities (common lounge, parking, internet, laundry, kitchen, restaurant/bar)
Chitty, Ward & Chua (2007)	Australia	Brand image; technical dimensions (kitchen, tv room, internet, telephone, meals, location. Functional dimension (staff); value for money
Musa & Thirumoorthi (2011)	Malaysia	Facilities, equipment, location, the atmosphere of friendliness, welcome and homeliness, cleanliness and the staff.
		(it continues)

Butler & Hannam (2013)	Norway	comfort, safety, and platforms for friendships to prosper
Sun et al (2014)	China	young, easy- going, friendly brand image
Brochado, Rita & Gameiro (2015)	Portugal	social atmosphere, location and city connection, staff, cleanliness, security and facilities.
Hory et al (2017)	Hungary	Design/architecture

Most travellers choose a hostel by their overall value for money and location, (Nash, Tyne & Davies, 2006; Firth & Hing, 1999, Hostelworld, 2016a), but the services such as Wi-Fi (WYSE TC, 2015), facilities (Firth & Hing, 1999), and the opportunity to know other cultures and meet other travellers (Hecht & Martin, 2006) are also important features.

Several authors indicate that a low-price hostel-stay is a critical factor for customers to choose them as tourist accommodation (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Nash, Tyne & Davies, 2006; Murphy, 2001; Firth & Hing, 1999). There is other sort of budget options (e.g. bed & breakfast, budget hotels) but hostels seem to highlight in accommodation industry, suggesting that price is important but is not at all.

Beyond low-fares, hostels customers are attracted by the technical dimensions, such as: facilities, cleanliness, and location (Chitty, Ward & Chua, 2007), and additional facilities such as laundry, internet and kitchen. However, most of authors agree that the main element of a hostel is the nature of its social interactions.

For instance, Sun et al (2014) affirm that **the choice to stay in a hostel more than a utilitarian purpose carries a symbolic meaning**, as being among other travellers and sharing energy of youth is an experiential aspect that align with most of consumption behaviour in tourism services. Hecht & Martin (2006) add that the opportunity to interact with other travellers, know new cultures and make new friends is very important in hostelling. For many, hostels are synonymous of resting, relaxation, and safe meeting places that act as locations where friendships and interactions with other likeminded visitors are established. In this mode, hostel's services connect to new traveller's wishes, turning into opportunities to an exchange of alternative cultures, a meeting point where tourists interact with others, tell and discover travel adventures (Butler & Hannam, 2013).

*"Youth hostels are much more than just bed and breakfast. They are the ideal place to stay and enjoy hospitality; to meet people from all over the world and to make friends, to have fun as well as meaningful conversations, to immerse into a new culture and to develop a better appreciation of people and the environment."*

**Angela Braasch-Eggert, HI Hostels International President**

The communal nature of hostel accommodation encourages social interaction and most of hostels have associated resources such as themed bars, activities and communal facilities that facilitate interactions. Murphy (2001, p.62) emphasizes: "within hostels, interior boundaries include dormitory rooms, communal eating, TV areas, common rooms, and outdoor areas. The props or furnishings within these boundaries need to be comfortable and appears 'home-like' touches assist creating a friendly atmosphere."

Shared facilities and common areas are important to create an environment of interactions but are pointless without the human factor. Literature suggests that one important factor of differentiation in hostels is the social/friendly atmosphere (Radha, 2015; Brochado, Rita & Gameiro, 2015; Musa & Thirumoorthi, 2011; Murphy, 2001) and for this, beyond guest to guest interaction, the staff is crucial. According to Papis (2006) staff is strictly related with the hostel performance and the turnaround in hostel's quality perception happened thanks to the change of their workforce, with high skilled and qualified employees. In hostels, staff should be able to facilitate guest's interactions, and to involve them in social activities, this way they can reduce stress/anxiety and increase guest satisfaction, contributing to create a friendly and social atmosphere (Murphy, 2001).

Even though, literature assumes that hostels are different from other type of accommodation, there are still scarce studies about them. Many studies have been mentioned hostels especially relating them with backpacking culture, but few of them centre contemporary hostels' management and demand as the main field.

In the last 15 years tourism research approached hostels describing their panorama in different country perspectives but these studies mainly associated hostel's features with some concepts as brand image (Sun et al, 2014; Chitty, Ward & Chua, 2007), loyalty (Nash, Thyne & Davies, 2006) and service quality (Brochado, Rita & Gameiro, 2015; Musa & Thirumoorthi, 2011), neglecting somehow service experience at hostels. In this manner, our research intends to contribute to existing literature by exploring the service experience at hostels.

## CHAPTER 3 Methodology

This chapter sets out the methodological underpinnings of the research in order to address the aim of this study which is **to explore the role of service experience in the context of hostels**, englobing the research objectives as follows:

- To bring empirical evidence on how hostel market develops in distinctive contexts such as in Brazil and Portugal;
- To identify and characterize successfully hostels' practices based on what customers perceive as a positive service experience;
- To examine the determinants (contextual, psychographics, demographics, etc.) of a hostel-stay;
- To identify the key features of a positive hostel experience and their nature;
- To determine the elements on hostels environment which contribute to enhance the customer experience;
- To develop a model of enhanced hostel experiences that is of theoretical and practical relevance to contemporary tourism industry.

This chapter summarizes the strategic methodological choices of the thesis based on the steps proposed by Mackenzie & Knip (2006), as follows:

1. Adapting the paradigm;
2. Identification of the approach;
3. Formulation of the research problem;
4. Review of the related research;
5. Identification of aim, objectives and research questions;
6. Selection of research design;
7. Selection of data collection techniques;
8. Selection of subjects;
9. Planning of data processing and analysis;
10. Write up findings and discussion.

The chapter first sets out to provide the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions of the study and the prevalent research paradigm. Then, it approaches the research strategy based on mixed methods and triangulation. In reviewing the role of experiences in tourism, the service experience and the hostels market, the most common methods were identified, and the appropriate ones in relation to this research were selected. As result, a four-stage qualitative and quantitative methods is presented by outlining the rationale for adopting the mixed methods. The next chapter provides an overview of the research design (figure 25), explaining each phase of the research process in detail. The discussion of each research phase provides the conceptualization of the method, the reason for adoption, and a detailed description of the data collection and data analysis processes. The chapter ends with a reflexion on the challenges and limitations of the research.

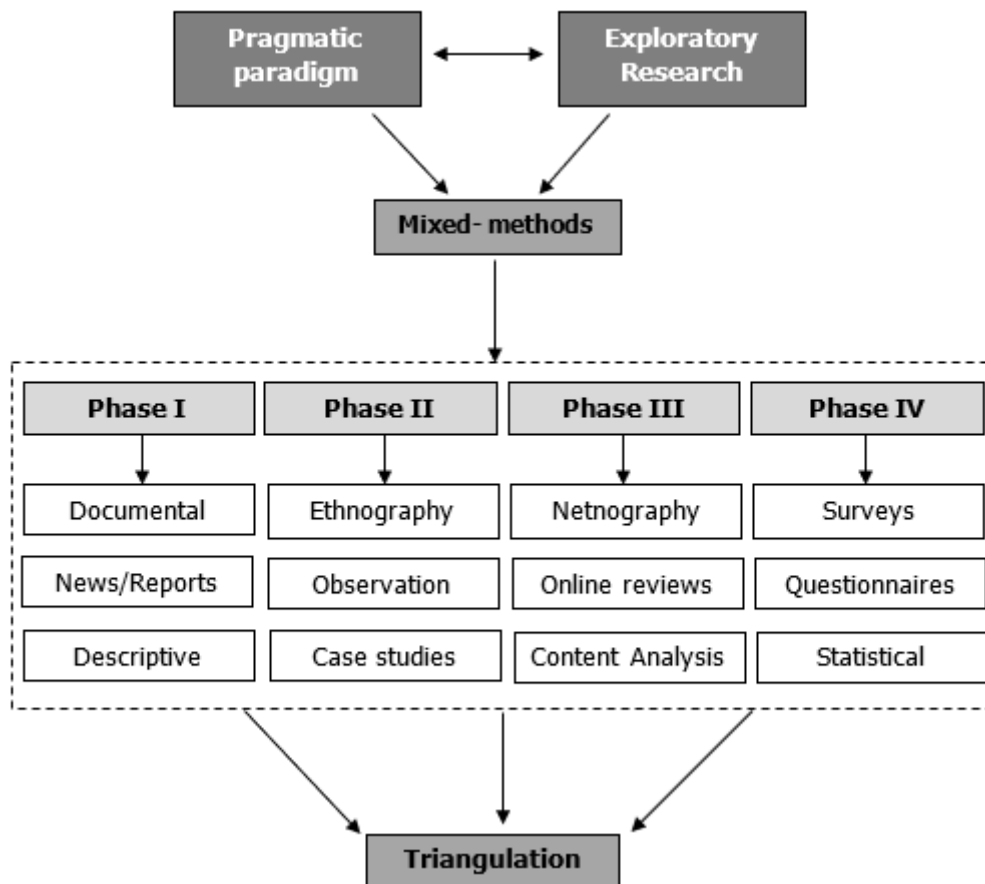


Figure 25 Research design

### 3.1 Research paradigms

In research, we traditionally follow some steps which are going to lead the entire research process. Ontology, epistemology, methodology and paradigms are usual terms in the thesis construction; they represent assumptions made by the researchers in the conduction of an investigation that will also lead the research design process.

#### 3.1.1 Epistemological and ontological assumptions

**Ontology** means the study of being and it is concerned with the “what is” problem, the nature of existence and the structure of the reality and from this basic assumption knowledge arises. The **epistemology** is the theory of knowledge and it is concerned with what counts as valid knowledge, and with the philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledges is possible, adequate and legitimate. There are a set of epistemologies:

For example: for objectivists reality is apart from the operation of any consciousness (e.g. A tree is a tree even before you are conscious about it, reality was there to be discovered), in the other hand for constructionists, there is no reality waiting for us to discover it, the truth comes out from our engagement with the realities in our world,



meaning is not discovered but constructed. But, is there one correct perspective? What we see in post-modern research is that object and subject are partners in the construction of knowledge.

If the ontology is concerned about the nature of the reality and the epistemology is concerned about which are the right philosophical assets to achieve the knowledge, they are intrinsically related. So, it is common that ontological and epistemological issues emerge together and researchers keep them as the same, as to talk about knowledge is to talk about knowledge reality (Crotty, 1998).

Associated to the reflection of knowledge the research must have principles and ideas, a plan of action to achieve the goals that is the **methodology**, which in turn is based on procedures and strategies, the **methods** used by the researchers.

A **paradigm**, also known as philosophical assumptions, theoretical perspective (Khun, 1970), or knowledge claims (Creswell, 2009) is a set of beliefs based on ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). It should be: (i) founded on the previous acquisitions of a discipline; (ii) accepted by the community of scientists of a given discipline; (iii) directed through the specification and choice of what to study, the formulation of hypothesis to explain the phenomenon observed, and the identification of the most suitable empirical research techniques (Corbetta, 2003).

When a research is positioned in a paradigm it will be assumed that it follows the system of said paradigm. More, beyond the influence of the research problem itself, paradigms are influenced by the pairs, but not exclusively. History of science shows that in different fields of knowledge there are standard illustrations of various theories in their conceptual, observational and instrumental applications. These statements are the community's paradigms, which are learned and shared by researchers when they study and practice (through papers, lectures and laboratory practices) in the related field. That is why even with ambiguities in paradigms, in mature scientific communities it is relatively easy to define it (Khun, 1970). This "easiness" of paradigm definition is commonly seen in natural sciences, known as hard sciences. But what about tourism? Tourism does not get the status of science<sup>4</sup>, and it has the need to drink from the source of different sciences.

In this thesis, we assume **tourism as a social phenomenon, a field of social sciences** that influences and is influenced by **multiple disciplines**, and as we understand that social reality is complex and may have several approaches, it is also

- **Ontology:** What is reality?
- **Epistemology:** What and how can I know reality/knowledge?
- **Theoretical perspective:** What approach can we use to acquire knowledge?
- **Methodology:** What procedures can we use to acquire knowledge?
- **Methods:** What tools can we use to acquire knowledge?
- **Sources:** What type of data can we collect?

Adapted from Crotty (1998)

<sup>4</sup>According to Panosso Neto (2005, p.143) tourism itself is not a science, but if it will be, it must be a science that comprehend the subjective factor of the many actors involved in the tourism process. Thus, it should be an applied social science, with methods and objectives different from exact sciences.

assumed that it is important to understand the philosophical ideas on which the research is based on.

Social research has been traditionally divided into two main paradigms, positivist and interpretivist, which represent long existing schools of social science. While the positivists focus on the methods of natural science, interpretivists stress that human beings differ from the material world.

**Positivism** separates the researcher and the reality, it assumes that reality exists beyond the human mind and its goal is to explain the problem. Believes in natural immutable laws and uses experimental-manipulative/observation detachment methodologies with quantitative techniques.

In **interpretivism** researcher and the study object are not separate but interdependent, knowledge is constructed through a person's lived experiences and has as goal to comprehend the problem. The methodology is based on interpretation and observed-interaction, with qualitative techniques.

The positivism had its rupture in the 20th century when the post positivism emerged. The main change is that **post positivism** sees results as imperfect, that reality is not absolute reality (as in positivism), but a probabilistic reality. Here quantitative techniques may also have some qualitative analysis, but it is still based on observer detachment and experimental methodologies (Corbetta, 2003).

The notion of paradigms has ancient origins and was used by Aristotle and Plato in their philosophical thoughts. However, for post-modern researchers this positioning in a dualist system (positivism - interpretivism) seemed very limited and restricted. This way, new paradigms emerged to refuse traditional chains of thought; however it does not mean that paradigms aren't important. Without a paradigm a science lacks orientations and choice criteria: all problems, all methods, all techniques are equally legitimate, but they should adapt to new times and in research needs. According to Khun (1970) this is a normal process in science, when the past is broken, and new construction begins.

Historically there is an emphasis on quantification in science. Fields of study that are more likeable to be quantified and measured are known as hard science or true science. On the other hand less quantifiable areas, especially social sciences are sometimes neglected (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). One point is that over the time the traditional sciences, have been ruling science world and dictating methodologies and methods to follow, however the diversity of problem-views and fields of study also required a diversity of scientific perspectives.

In more recent years, since Khun's manifesto "The structure of Scientific Revolutions" the discussion about new paradigms in sciences intensified, and especially in social sciences a sort of paradigms emerged (Denzin, 2010). Nowadays, social sciences are found on a variety of paradigms and alternative knowledge claim positions are possible. Four main paradigms are mentioned in table 13 (Creswell, 2009):

Table 13 Characteristics of the main paradigms in social sciences.

<i><b>Theoretical perspective</b></i>	<i><b>Ontology</b></i>	<i><b>Epistemology</b></i>	<i><b>Methodology</b></i>	<i><b>Methods</b></i>
Post positivism	Critical realism	Modified dualist/objectivist	Modified experimental/manipulative	Quantitative include: sampling, measurement, statistical, questionnaire, could be also qualitative: focus group, interview
Constructivism	Relativist realism	Transactional and subjectivist	Hermeneutical, dialectical, phenomenological, ethnographic, interpretivist	Qualitative methods: interviews, observations,
Advocacy/ Participatory	Political realism	Collaboration	Critical theory, neo-Marxism, feminist, emancipatory, participatory.	Qualitative methods with quantitative mixed methods: Civil actions, interviews, observations, focus group.
Pragmatism	Practical realism	Objectivist and Subjectivist	Mix-methods	Methods are matched to the specific questions and purpose of the research

Source: based on Crotty (1998), Creswell (2009), Guba & Lincoln (1994) and Mackenzie & Knipe (2006).

The **post positivism** is based on the determination and reductionism, empirical observation and measurement with theory verification. This position is sometimes known as “scientific method” or “science research”, also called quantitative research or empirical science. The post positivism emerged as a rethinking of positivism, challenging the traditional notion of the absolute truth of knowledge, in this new approach truth is based on statistical probabilities. Post positivists reflect a need to examine causes that influence outcomes, such as in experiments. It also intent to reduce the ideas into a small set of ideas to test, such as when emerges variables to test hypothesis and research questions. In this position claim the main critic is that not all research –problem fit to a determinist, cause-outcomes approach.

The **constructivism** is based on the understanding of a research problem, considers multiple participant meanings, social and historical construction and has as goal a theory generation. Constructivism is often combined with interpretivism; it assumes that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. These meanings could be multiple and varied, being a challenge for the researcher to understand the complexity of views and meanings and to address them into few categories or ideas. The goal in constructivism is to rely as much as possible on participant’s views of study situation, this way participants can construct the meaning of a situation/problem. Here the critics say that personal setting leads the research and personal background of the researchers shapes their interpretation, however the researcher’s intent is to interpret other’s meanings about the world.

The **Advocacy/Participatory** is political, with an orientation for change and empowerment issues and is also collaborative. This claim position aroused in the 1980s and 1990s from researchers who felt that the post positivism did not fit marginalized individuals or groups issues and did not adequate to social justice problems. It has its historical bonds in the theory of Marx, Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas and Freire and can be seen as a participatory constructivism. In this perspective, the research needs to lead politics issues and a political agenda, such as empowerment, inequality, oppression, domination, suppression and alienation. This way, participants may help to design questions, collect data, analysis, and in sum actively participate in the research process.

**Pragmatism** is based on consequences of actions, is problem - centred and pluralistic. Early pragmatists reject the scientific notion that social inquiry was able to access the "truth" about the real world just by virtue of a single scientific method. Pragmatists are concerned about "what works" and to problem solutions. Instead of methods being important, the problem is most important, and researchers use all approaches to understand it and, in this sense, mix-methods are more used in this claim position.

### *3.1.2 Pragmatic approach*

The pragmatic approach has its basis in the earlies 1900s with William James (1842-1910) and John Dewey (1859-1952) in a continuing of the ideas from Socrates to the British empiricists. They launched a reformation in science's way of thinking, predicting that pragmatism would be the philosophy of the future. Years later, pragmatism emerged reshaped. First, the early pragmatist's emphasized experience, while actual researchers are uneasy with that term. Second, early pragmatists believed their philosophical ideas had ethical and political consequences, while contemporary thinkers consider it as a method of analysis (Kloppenber, 2003).

Although, very different from the original version, pragmatism today is very alive and applicable to social sciences with an approach that attracts postmodern scientists because it is based on the critic to all claims of objectivity, consensus, and truth. There is no unavoidable choice, if in one hand pragmatism rejects positivism because no theory can satisfy its demands, on the other hand it rejects anti-positivism because virtually any theory would satisfy them. To cite Powell (2001, p.884, in Pansiri, 2005): "...the pragmatists proposes to reorient the assessment of theories around a third criterion: the theory's capacity to solve human problems (Rorty, 1989; Stich, 1990). To a pragmatist, the mandate of science is not to find truth or reality, the existence of which is perpetually in dispute, but to facilitate human problem-solving."

According to Creswell (2009) pragmatism is based on the following knowledge claims:

- Pragmatism is not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality. This applies to mixed methods research in which can be drawn from both qualitative and quantitative assumptions.
- Individual's researchers are free to choose the methods, techniques and procedures of research that best meet their needs and purposes.
- Pragmatists do not see the world as an absolute unity.

- Truth is what works at the time and it is not based on a strict dualism between mind and the reality. Researchers use both quali-quant data to provide the best understanding of the problem.
- Pragmatists' researchers look into the "what" and "how" to research based on its intended consequences. Researchers need to establish a purpose for mixing methods with rationale reasons and why they need to be mixed.
- Pragmatists agree that research always occur in social, historical, political and other contexts. Mix methods may include a postmodern turn, a theoretical lens that is reflexive of social justice and political aims
- Pragmatists believe that we need to stop asking questions about reality and the laws of nature and simply change the subject.

For mixed-methods researcher's pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews and different assumptions, as well as to different forms of data collection and analysis in the mixed methods study.

Tourism as an area that embraces disciplines such as geography, political science, law, economics, philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, strategy, human resource management, operations management and marketing and consequently suffers with a fragmentation of theory. In consonance, there is a discussion about the origins, epistemology and methodological approaches which are suitable to tourism; however it has been polarized in a business-economic / sociological-anthropological approach, one more positivist another interpretivist oriented (Pansiri, 2005). However, recent calls in social sciences, also in tourism, suggest that an understanding of both positivist and phenomenological philosophical traditions, accompanied by both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques are suitable. In this manner pragmatism offer avenues from which tourism research can be done (Pansiri, 2006).

**Tourism is a social, dynamic and contemporary phenomenon that requires research approaches which communicate with the markets.**

Thus, considering that 'to be located in a particular paradigm is to view the world in a particular way' (Burrell and Morgan, 1979, p. 24), the present thesis aligns with the stream of research philosophy that rejects the 'either-or' in a contemporary pragmatic perspective. This way, it is considered that practical ontological perspective, combined with mix-methods methodology, provides the most comprehensive theoretical underpinning to unveil the research problem.

## 3.2 Research Strategy

### 3.2.1 *Mixed – methods strategy*

The positivist and interpretive paradigms have been profiled in terms of their ontological, axiological and epistemological assumptions and historically they are tied to the qualitative versus quantitative fields. This polarization fights a 'war' that limits scientific approaches, and as Wilson & Hollinshead (2015) states, researchers should avoid becoming too constrained by or fixated on 'methods', 'approaches' and even 'disciplines' and embrace the multiplicity of social sciences.

**Mixed methods are a viable research approach that bridge the gap between quantitative and qualitative methodologies, and are often seen as eclectic, pluralistic and rejecting traditional dualisms.**

(Creswell, 2003)

Many researchers feel that the use of either quantitative or qualitative methods requires altering one's underlying assumptions, thereby examples of articles that use mixed methods are fewer. However, this is unnecessary since it is not the method but how it is used that needs to be consistent with the philosophical assumptions (Bahl & Milne, 2006). As such, the appropriateness and use of a method is determined by the researcher's orientation and the phenomena being studied. Another aspect of this is that the methods do not define the type of study that is being conducted, as noted by Geertz (1973 in Bahl & Milne, 2006) methods do not define the research; rather, intellectual effort does.

It is considered that tourism in its very nature is multi-method, involving different forms of data collection, multiple studies and the use of triangulation. As stated by Wilson & Hollinshead (2015) a significant part of the tourism future remains inevitably seeded in the social sciences (and the humanities) of tourism and within interpretive, 'soft' ways of understanding the other, the self, and the hybrid. Additionally, qualitative methods can be and have been used successfully in positive studies and for this logic quantitative methods can be used in interpretive studies. Considering this, the thesis follows a mix-method strategy.

### 3.2.2 *Triangulation*

All methods have limitations but researchers felt that biases inherent in any single method could neutralize or cancel the biases of other methods. In this mode, triangulating data sources emerges for seeking convergence across qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell, 2009). It is a concept from ancient Greek mathematics, but in modern times it is more used as a checking system.

Triangulation is the process by which several methods (data, sources, theories or researchers) are used in the study of a phenomenon and could be divided in four types: triangulation of data, investigators, theories and methodologies (Yin, 2014):

- Data triangulation: researchers gain their data from different groups, location and times;
- Investigators triangulation: More than one researcher/evaluators involved;
- Theory triangulation: use of different theoretical perspectives in the study of one problem;
- Methodological triangulation: adopts different methodologies.

In this thesis, we considered the triangulation of different sources of data and methodologies to reach the research problem and for considering triangulation as a strategy for producing better knowledge in the research.

### 3.3 Research Phases

The subsequent sections introduce, discuss and provide an explanation for each method in the four-phase mixed methods strategy, while an overview of data collection plan is showed as following in table 14:

Table 14 Data collection plan

<i><b>Phase</b></i>	<i><b>Method</b></i>	<i><b>Why</b></i>	<i><b>With Whom/ Number</b></i>	<i><b>When/ Where</b></i>	<i><b>How</b></i>
<b>I</b>	Documental Analysis	Needed for systematic identification and characterization of hostel's market in Brazil and Portugal	175 newspaper articles, Hostelworld database and official reports.	From 2013-2016/online. 2013-2017 the reports	Reading Brazilian/Portuguese newspaper articles from 2011 to 2016 mentioning hostels and counting existing hostels on Hostelworld website. Reading official reports
<b>II</b>	Ethnographic fieldwork	Needed to get a close perspective on hosteller's culture and hostels services and to understand the practices of the top-rated hostels	5 hostels	Two weeks of immersion. August of 2014 (in Lisbon) and 2015 (in Rio )	Staying as a regular guest of selected hostels and observing-participating with their services and customers
<b>III</b>	Netnographic Content Analysis	Needed to identify the key factors of a hostel experience under a customer perspective	500 online comments	From September to December of 2015 on Hostelworld platform	Creating a profile as a Hostelworld platform user (works as social network) and collecting other user's comments

(continue)

<b>V</b>	Surveys				
	With hostels	Needed to describe Brazilian/Portuguese hostels in terms of size, time of existence, price and customers' profile	Brazilian and Portuguese hostels / 112 valid questionnaires	From September of 2016 to February 2017	Sending online questionnaire to the hostels included in Hostelworld list
	With travellers	to understand why travellers stay or not in hostels and to measure the constructs of customer experience in hostels' services	Travellers staying and not staying in hostels / 599 valid questionnaires	From September of 2016 to February 2017	Sending online questionnaire to about 50 groups related to travel on Facebook

### *3.3.1 Phase I – Documental Analysis*

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of research reports and journal articles that mention document analysis as part of the methodology (Bowen, 2009). In some cases the papers analysed in literature review are not sufficiently detailed to reach some specific goals; using documents to support the research process has been experienced by the researchers.

There is a variety of sources to be used as part of documental analysis. Those documents could be: advertisements, agendas, attendance registers and minutes of meetings, manuals, background papers, books and brochures, diaries and journals, event programs, letters and memoranda, maps and charts, newspapers, press releases and a sort of organisational or institutional files.

According to Bowen (2009, p.27) document analysis "is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material". It requires data to be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge. Document analysis is often used in combination of with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulation, as documents of all types can help the researcher to discover relevant insights to the research problem.

In this thesis, data analysis was used as a complement of qualitative research, especially as a complementarity for picturing hostel scenario in Brazil and Portugal. Sources as official tourism organizations reports, legislations, and the Hostelworld search database, were crucial to delineate the panorama of hostel's market in terms of legal framework and market dimension. Albeit the information about hostel's market in Brazil and Portugal



is scarce and fragmented, a document analysis with web-news sources was needed to characterize and understand the hostel market relevance in each country context.

All the online news containing the keyword "hostel" were searched and then refined by date and websites reliability. The news was selected by date, from 2011 to October of 2016. And for being posted in reliable and recognized news website, as for instance in Brazil, in UOL, Globo, Terra, Catraca Livre and in Portugal Jornal de Notícias, Expresso, Visão, Público, etc. The final sample was 175 news, 94 in Brazilian sources and 81 in Portuguese, which were read and analysed. The results are further discussed in chapter 4.

### *3.3.2 Phase II – Ethnographic Fieldwork*

Ethnography is the study of social interactions, behaviours, and perceptions that occur within groups, teams, organisations, and communities. It began as a methodology of anthropology and social sciences focused in studying ancient tribes, having as prior researchers Malinowski (2005, first published in 1922) and Geertz (2000, first published in 1973). Whilst it was being developed as a technique to study specialized group activities with special attention to interactions, it was also popularized in social sciences (Reeves, Kuper and Hodges, 2008).

#### **3.3.2.1 Ethnographic approach and observation**

In ethnographic studies, the focus is in an entire group that shares a common culture, and the ethnographic approach presuppose that the researcher must become immersed in the daily lives of the participants to observe their behaviour and to then interpret the culture or social group and systems (Creswell, 2009). The role of observation as a sociological research method is central to ethnography because it allows the researcher to find out how something factually works or occurs. There are two main approaches: there are studies in which the observer does not become part of the observed field (non-participant observation) and studies in which the researcher participate as "insider" (participant observation) (Flick, 2009).

In participant observation, the researcher tries to get the knowledge and the assimilation of the field through the inside, as a participant you observe from a member's perspective but also influence what you observe due to your participation. The point here is "going native" to gain an internal perspective on the studied field as far as possible. However, one of the limitations of participant observation is precisely to get too immersed in the field of study because it is required of the researcher becoming familiar with the field but still be able to conduct a systematic observation as a stranger at the same time (Flick, 2009).

Ethnographic approach has been applied to a sort of disciplines, for instance, The British Medical Journal include ethnography as one of the methodological approaches commonly used by qualitative researchers in the health professions and mention as following that

**ethnographic research is based on some key features** (Reeves, Kuper and Hodges, 2008):

- A strong emphasis on exploring the nature of a particular social phenomenon, rather than setting out to test hypotheses about it;
- A tendency to work primarily with "unstructured data" – that is, data that have not been coded at the point of data collection as a closed set of analytical categories;
- And investigation of a small number of cases.

Especially in business, marketing and **tourism** this method was **appropriated due to its potential to reconstruct social reality** as a basis for developing insights into behaviours and the development of tools such as: interviews, data collection and analysis. As explained by Rosenthal & Capper (2006, p.218): "business ethnography draws qualitative research traditions to create research skills and methods that can be applied to create deep understanding of activities and populations of interest for commercial purposes".

Applying this matter to consumer and tourist studies, the main goal of using ethnographic methodology is to make implicit needs explicit by describing how customer and users experience behaves in practice, rather than how they report the experiences, as it occurs in traditional marketing research (Rosenthal & Capper, 2006). When customers are studied in the context of the product/service use, they receive memory cues from the environment. As such it is important for ethnographers to observe how customers interact with service, the ritual of encounters, to analyse the context of use and then gather further information to improve the product/service.

In sum, through ethnographic methods it is possible for marketing researchers to learn about customer's attitudes and values by observing their behaviours (Rosenthal & Capper, 2006). Additionally, for businesses it is relevant to understand customer's attitudes and beliefs based on observation because it may lead to a range of insights to new applications of existing products, to identification of new opportunities or to appreciation for the emotional, social, psychological or cultural dimensions of the value of product/service to the customer.

Accordingly, in tourism studies, ethnographic approach has been used to understand several issues, including backpackers culture (Sorensen, 2003) and tourist experiences (White & White, 2004). Therefore, considering that an ethnographic approach could provide rich, holistic insights into tourist's views and actions, as well as to explore the nature of a phenomenon, ethnographic approach was considered suitable to get into the nature of service experience in hostels. For this, a small but relevant number of cases were selected with the aim to get acquainted with hostels and hostellers' culture and the method of participant observation was applied in order to gain a close familiarity with the object of study.

### 3.3.2.2 Justification of selected cases

The cases reported in this thesis were selected based on three criteria: **database inclusion, location and customer's evaluation**. First the hostels must be included in the Hostelworld list, then they should be located in Brazil or Portugal and the hostels selected were considered as successful cases for being recognized by customers as 'the best' hostels.

Hostelworld was selected as database source for being the leading global hostel-booking platform (which includes Hostelworld, Hostelbookers and Hostels.com in its portfolio). This database has about 33,000 properties in more than 170 countries operates in 19 different languages with over eight million reviews. Annually, Hostelworld Group announce a list (called Hoscars) with the preferred hostels, according to customer's review. In this ranking it is evaluated: value for money, security, location, staff, atmosphere, cleanliness and facilities. The Hostelworld platform also works as a social network and allows customers to create a personal profile where they will share personal-demographic and leave a comment about their stay-experience. That information is online and open-access from which were retrieved the comments analysed in the phase II of the research.

Portuguese hostels are internationally recognized by their excellence, collecting awards and affirming themselves in hostelling market through positive comments of hostellers worldwide. Hostelworld.com, in its 2017 Awards recognized Portugal as the country with a larger number of mentions, with 15 establishments among the best hostels in the world, ahead of other countries such as Spain and USA, respectively awarded with 10 and 9 prizes (Hostelworld, 2017). In the last four years Portugal has excelled in many categories, for instance, best hostel, best hostel chain, among other (Hostelworld, 2017). For this reason, Portuguese hostels can be considered a successful case, not only for their increasing popularity but for maintaining a leading position.

On the other hand, although Brazil is a tourist destination still in development, it plays an important role in the Latin American hostel market. Brazilian hostels highlight with 2 of top hostels in Latin America and hold the potential for growth. Beyond that, Brazil is studied as a requirement of the funding institution of this research. Thus, Brazil and Portugal were selected as case studies. Of these countries, two cities were selected to be the source of the fieldwork. Lisbon, in Portugal, was chosen for being the most tourist city of the country, which receives 5.2 million of stays in a year (Francisco, 2016), while Rio de Janeiro is the most visited city by foreigner tourists in Brazil - 1.6 million per year, according to MTur Brazil (2015). All those criteria remained in five selected cases, three in Portugal and two in Brazil.

### *3.3.3 Phase III – Netnographic content analysis*

With the increasing number of people using online communities such as: newsgroups, blogs, forum, social media, sites, podcasting, photosharing communities etc., the internet becomes an important site for research (Bowler, 2010). In tourism it is no different, tourists are even more able to share their experiences, posting online reviews

and comments about several tourist services, turning online field also into a space for data collection. Through the online field it is possible to gather information on the symbolism, meanings and consumption patterns of specific online consumer groups and in the specific case of hostels whose main target is the digitally native generation, also known as Millennials, the internet is a crucial field of study.

### 3.3.3.1 Netnography

Traditionally, ethnography provided tools to understand offline dynamics. However with the new online social dynamics new approaches were required. Netnography, also called online ethnography is ethnography adapted to the study of online communities (Kozinets, 2002). Netnography is based primarily upon the observation of textual discourse; different from in-person ethnography it balances the online discourse and behaviour in their online context.

Netnography is basically different because it treats online communications not as mere "content," but as social interaction, considering that the words play a role of cultural artefact and express meaning (Kozinets, 2010). To be considered as an netnographic investigation all that may be required is that the data collection to be analysed should understand consumers in the online and communal cultural context which they are immersed, this is more important than the way that the analysis is conducted (Kozinets, 2006).

As a method, netnography is faster, simpler and less expensive than traditional ethnography and more naturalistic and unobtrusive than focus groups or interviews. According to Kozinets (2002) there are two main reasons to use netnography approach to marketing. Firstly, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of the Internet for customers. They are active online and often take part in discussions informing other consumers about products and brands. Secondly, if one of the main goals of marketing research is to identify and understand taste, desires, symbol-systems and decision-making influences of particular consumers groups, online communities are the contemporary fieldplace.

"Netnography is Internet, or technologically networked, ethnography. Netnography is ethnography adapted to the complexities of our contemporary, technologically mediated social world." (Kozinets, 2010, p.3).

According to Kozinets (2010), there are some fundamentals of netnography:

1. It is naturalistic, following social expression to its online appearances;
2. It is immersive, drawing the researcher into an engaged, deeper understanding;
3. It is descriptive, seeking to convey the rich reality of contemporary consumers' lives, with all of their hidden cultural meanings as well as their colourful graphics, drawings, symbols, sounds, photos, and videos;

4. It is multi-method, combining well with other methods, both online and offline, such as interviews and videography. Like all methods, netnography often works even better when triangulated with other sources of insight;

5. It is adaptable, moving effortlessly from newsgroups to blogs, wikis, virtual worlds, social networking sites, podcasting and mobile online/offline communities and whatever else the future has in store.

Such as ethnography, there are types of netnography concerning the levels of researcher's participation in the online community (figure 26), which include participating in interactions, practices, exchanges and information (Kozinets, 2006).

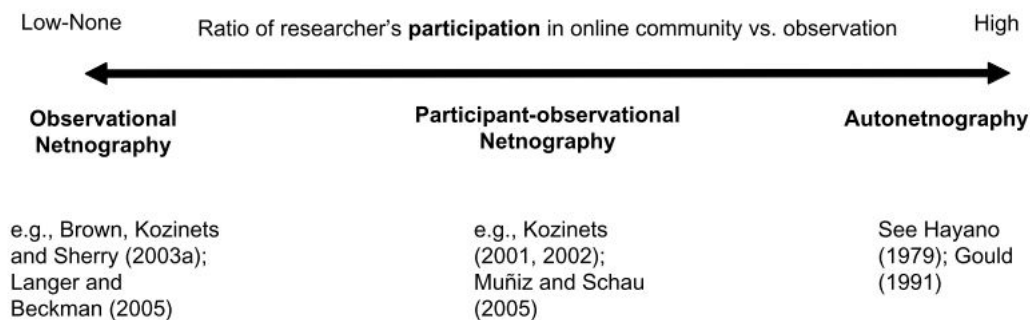


Figure 26: A spectrum of different types of netnography  
Source: Kozinets (2006)

- Observational netnography places the researcher apart from its object of study, it is a mere observer.
- Participant netnography is when netnographer become a member of the group internalizing their meanings to speak with authority of a member who represents that culture.
- Autonetnography is where individuals reflect on their own online experiences and then use these field notes and observations to provide insights into online consumer practices and meanings (Mkono et al, 2015).

Mkono & Markwell (2014) highlights that in the tourism field most of researchers adopted a passive approach and did not participate in online exchanges. This tactic is used to gain individual consent and ensure that participants interact in an uninhibited manner that is a characteristic of online communities. However, while passive observer approaches have their merits, active participation allows the researcher to probe and direct the flow and content of communicative acts online. Such an approach brings with it considerations relating to researcher disclosure and informed consent.

Netnography is considered an innovative method (Bengry-Howell et al, 2011), and most of the authors stress that using netnography as complementation of mix methods could be important to guarantee the validation of results and also gain confidence as an approach in tourism studies.

This approach has been increasing among tourism researchers and has been applied in diversified purposes, in which recent studies can be mentioned such as: female tourism

(Zhang & Hitchcock, 2014), food tourism (Mkono et al, 2013), dark tourism (Podoshen, 2013); tourism and migrations (Janta et al, 2011), and memorable experiences in tourism (Chandralal et al, 2015). In terms of tourist experiences studies, Rageh et al (2013) classify netnography as the best method to examine customer experience because customers usually write their reviews after their stay ends, allowing the researcher to collect a more original testimony that is less affected by their own observation.

As it is presented, netnography can be applied to analyse a variety of perspectives that support social sciences understanding especially in the tourism field. But if in one hand there is an interest per part of academic fellows to use netnography, on the other hand, many consider netnography as a recent field, that remains as a not so confident method, mostly because of its low rigor in its application. However, this scenario is changing according to Mkono & Markwell (2014) with the increase in publishing in top ranked journals, it is expected that netnography will be more accepted as an efficacious methodology.

A thorough, detailed, netnographic study can reveal much about consumer behaviours, opinions, tastes, impressions, and interactions, and also as face-to-face ethnography, netnography provides a window into the realities of consumer groups as they go about their lives. Netnography is a powerful way to understand the changing marketplace, to gain an understanding of tomorrow's trends today, and to gain ideas and insights as valuable inputs to the front-end ideation process. In this thesis, netnography works as a complementary approach to understand new travellers' culture and hostel customer's experience in a market that is leaded by millennials, also known as the digitally native generation.

### 3.3.3.2 Selection of online reviews

For the netnographic analysis the online reviews posted on the Hostelworld platform (figure 27) were considered as starting points, as they provide online and free access information, with the commenter personal information of the commenter and its content itself.

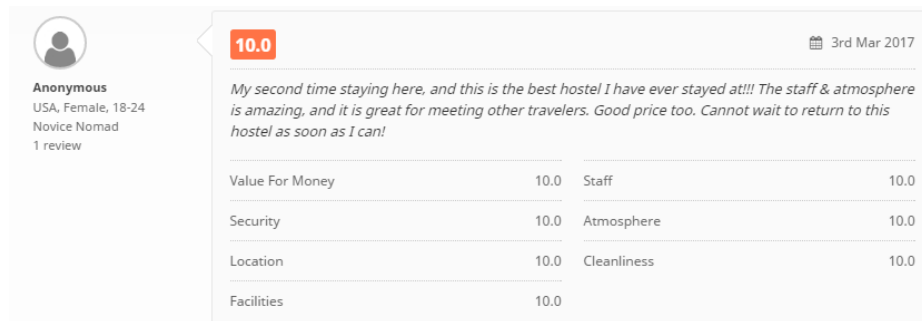


Figure 27 Example of Hostelworld reviews  
Source: Hostelworld.com

From that platform, online reviews were extracted based on the main criteria of (i) be a positive review and (ii) be written in English. Additionally, it was taken into consideration to extract a proportional number of comments per hostel but still elected randomly. For instance, from the hostels selected as case study, some had more than 4000 reviews available while other less than 1000. In this mode, a number of 100 comments for each hostel seemed to fit the research goals well, being even a higher number than previous and similar studies, such as of Rageh et al's (2013). In this mode, a total of 500 positive comments were analysed.

### 3.3.3.3 Content Analysis with Nvivo

The interpretation of data is at the core of qualitative research and content analysis and refers to the applying methods for the interpretation of text in their various forms as such: interviews, narratives, photos, etc. (Flick, 2009). The interpretation of texts serves to develop the theory as well as the foundation for deciding which cases to select next. Content analysis may have two different goals: one is to reveal and uncover statements putting them into their context and another is to reduce the original text, summarizing and categorizing.

Bardin (2009) stresses that there is a debate concerning the qualitative and quantitative analysis because in the quantitative analysis the information is seen through the frequency of the characteristics emerging from the content, while in the qualitative what matters is the presence or absence of a given content characteristic or a set of characteristics in each fragment of the message. If in one hand the frequencies give more objectivity to the process, on the other hand the more qualitative approach gives a more descriptive character to content analysis. According to Bardin (2009) the main objective of content analysis is the inference and that is increasingly common among researchers combining both indicators.

For this research, content analysis was chosen as a suitable method to identify the key factors of a positive hostel experience and to describe their nature, taking frequencies and fragments of messages into consideration. This process was conducted with the Nvivo 11 software, which supported the organization, categorization, coding and analysis of data. Finally, the step-by-step of this process is explained in detail on chapter 7 as well as their result.

### *3.3.4 Phase IV – Surveys and Statistical Analysis*

Statistics is a mathematical instrument needed to collect, organize, present, analyse and interpret quantitative data (Pestana and Gageiro, 2000). In the thesis, we resort to this source as a way to explore the data in a quantitative vein. The statistical analysis generates insights to cross the quantitative results with the qualitative phases expanding the exploratory process. Thus, this section encompasses the two parts of phase IV, justifying their choice and application. First, it describes the development and application

process of the two instruments, which consisted in online surveys: one applied to the hostels and other to travellers. Second, the statistical analysis concerning the description of the tests used and their assumptions.

### 3.3.4.1 Online surveys

Internet is a fruitful area for conducting survey research because nowadays an increasing amount of communicative activity takes place in the online field. Much has been discussed about the online versus paper format and about the validity of online data collection, but studies show that a format-specific self-selection of respondents do not guarantee a no biases (Dolnicar, Laesser, and Matus, 2009). Both, online or paper surveys have disadvantages and advantages (table 15), but reliability arrears in the process of the research and researchers themselves not only in the research form.

Before the massive internet area, researchers discussed the disadvantages, mainly concerning: (1) sampling issues - there is no guarantee that participants provide accurate demographic or characteristics, and (2) access issues, as it is limited to those who have access to the internet and in the case of online communities' research, demographic profile of the participants are not open access (Wright, 2005).

However, as long as more and more people are gaining access to the Internet, the popularity of online surveys uprises. They are increasingly being used as a research tool in different fields and in tourism and hospitality fields it is no different. Advantages are: low cost, efficiency or fast response time, instant data entry and high response rate, encourages researchers to apply online surveys as a viable alternative for the right research topic and target audience (Hung & Law, 2011).

Table 15 Pros and Cons of online research

<i><b>Pros</b></i>	<i><b>Cons</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low cost</li> <li>• Efficient/fast response time</li> <li>• Instant data entry</li> <li>• High response rate</li> <li>• Easy to follow up/communicate with respondents</li> <li>• Completeness of survey</li> <li>• Fun/Novel/Enjoyable experience</li> <li>• Environmentally friendly</li> <li>• Sample can be representative of general population</li> <li>• Easy access to wider range of population/wide geographic reach</li> <li>• Convenient for respondents</li> <li>• Reduce social desirability effect</li> <li>• Useful in reaching hard-to-find target audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representativeness of sample</li> <li>• Low response rate</li> <li>• Researcher or respondents may encounter technical difficulties</li> <li>• Inactive or inaccurate e-mail addresses</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Hung & Law (2011)



For this research, we used two different surveys with distinct objectives, one applied to hostels and the other to travellers. Basing the quantitative data collection on online surveys reached the objectives, because it allowed us to have access to a wider range of population and in different geographical areas. Beyond that, the chosen web survey service (google forms), provided a user-friendly interface increasing the number of responses; is free of charge and allowed the control of survey's completeness, reducing the levels of missing values in responses. In addition, the sample gathered through online surveys showed to be not statistically but empirically representative, aligning with the exploratory vein of the study.

#### *3.3.4.1.1 Survey applied to hostels*

The survey applied to hostels was needed to describe Brazilian and Portuguese markets in terms of location, size, time of existence and demographic profile of the customers. For this survey it was considered as universe all the hostels inserted in the hostelworld.com database, which represented 336 hostels in Portugal and 579 in Brazil. The survey was sent through official online sources, in this case e-mail, Facebook page, or both. The online questionnaire was created and shared through the Google forms platform and consisted in a set of 10 questions, as follows:

Description of the hostel:

- Name of the hostel
- Location
- Number of rooms
- Number of beds
- Year of creation
- Medium price (per bed) in high season
- Medium price (per bed) in low season

Description of guest's profile:

- Medium guests age (options: 18-24 years old; 25-30; 31-40 or more than 41)
- Proportion of domestic – international visitors in percentage)
- Main international markets

#### *3.3.4.1.2 Survey applied to travellers*

The survey applied to travellers had as main goal to collect travellers' perceptions and/or experiences concerning hostels, not only from those who usually stay in this type of accommodation, but also from those who never planned to stay at hostels or that gave up doing it. The questionnaire was developed in the online Google Forms platform and was drawn to be shared within all profiles of travellers. However, as this universe seemed vast and too extensive, some filters were applied to reach the target. Facebook was chosen as the dissemination platform, for being the largest online social media in the world, with a monthly 2 billion active members (Facebook, 2017). Beyond that, in

this media, groups and pages work as an online community approaching persons with common interests. In this case, the survey was disseminated in about 30 groups and pages focused on, traveling, as described in table 16:

Table 16 Groups and pages of survey dissemination

<b>Target</b>	<b>Groups and Pages</b>
Brazilian travellers	Csf-Couchsurfing; Blog Raizes do Mundo; Blog Viaje Leve
Brazilian Backpackers	Csf-Mochileiros; Group Mochileiros
Latin American backpackers	Mochileros Venezuela; Mochileros Peru; Mochileros Chile
Latin American travellers	Viajeros a Europa; Viajeros.com
Portuguese travellers	Amantes de viagens; Carpooling; Blog Salty Wanderer
Portuguese backpackers	Portuguese backpackers in Australia
International students living in Portugal	Erasmus Porto; Erasmus Aveiro
European travellers	Carpooling Croatia, Balkan Traveling Community
Worldwide travellers	Nomads – a life of alternative travel; Travellers, Travel Addiction
Worldwide backpackers	Backpackers, Backpacking Southeast Asia Alone, Backpackers alone in New Zealand; Indonesian Backpacking;
Northern American backpackers	Backpacking
Turkey and Middle East travellers	Couch Rail; Nomads
Northern American travellers	Adventure Addicts
Oceania	Australian Independent Backpacking

The instrument used in this phase was drawn up based on a literature review and the qualitative empirical findings, passing also for a two-phase process of calibration. Firstly, it was analysed by a panel of four tourism experts with different backgrounds (management, statistics and marketing), and before the dissemination, a 20 respondents pilot-survey was conducted. All of this was necessary to identify minor errors and improve the final questionnaire which included questions organized into six parts: (i) characterization of Personal background; (ii) travel motivations and behaviour; (iii) accommodation preferences; (iv) hostel profile; (v) customer experience at hostels; (vi) demographic profile. They are explained in detail, as following:

**Part I:** inquiries about some aspects of the personality and the personal background of the respondent. First question is opened and the second is multiple choice.

I.a Write four words that describe your personality:

|Open question|

I.b Select the interests that match with you: (5 items at most)

( ) Sports; ( ) Fashion ad Design; ( ) Decoration and Bricolage; ( ) Arts and Culture; ( ) Technology and Games; ( ) Travel; ( ) Gastronomy; ( ) Social Service and Volunteering; ( ) Yoga and Meditation; ( ) Environment and Nature; ( ) Fitness and Nutrition; ( ) Nightlife and Festivals; ( ) Entertainment (TV, Series, etc.); ( ) Science; ( ) Politics; ( ) Music.

Part II concerns the travel motivations and behaviour while travelling, especially about the preferences and the expenses. The items were measured in a 5-point Likert scale. Item II.a was adapted from Eusébio & Carneiro (2015) while the item II.b is based on UNWTO (2017b) statistics recommendations on tourism satellite accountant.

II. a Travel motivation |Likert scale where 1 - totally disagree and 5 totally agree|

When I travel I search for...	1	2	3	4	5
Party and festivals					
Nightlife					
To eat and to drink					
To enjoy the landscapes					
To rest					
To escape from everyday life					
To see as much as possible from the destination					
To try local gastronomy					
To learn new things					
To interact with people					
To visit museums / monuments					
To make new friends					
To work					

II. b Travel expenses |Likert scale where 1 – I spend little or nothing and 5 I spend a lot|

I spend with...	1	2	3	4	5
Accommodation (hotels, hostels, resorts...)					
Food and Beverage					
Transportation					
Travel agencies and tour operators					
Cultural services					
Recreation and leisure					
Other activities					

Part III inquires respondents on their preferences regarding tourist accommodation. Items 'a' and 'b' refer to a sort of type of accommodation within the main objective to rate it in an ordinal scale, for this, those questions are multiple choice with at most two options. On the other hand, item 'c' used a different approach, the semantic differential scale. That is a type of rating scale designed to measure the connotative meaning of objects, events and concepts. It was created by Charles Osgood, firstly as an approach to psychology, in alternative to Likert scale to measure opinions, attitudes and values (Osgood, 1964).

In the semantic differential scale, words and phrases are placed in bipolar adjectives pairs (e.g. bad-good, weak-strong) and respondents attribute different loads according

to their judgement in an ordinal scale. The opposites in each bipolar scale are linked in most cases by a continuum of five or seven points, in which the middle alternative in the scale serves as a zero point or a neutral response.

Even though semantic differential emerged from psychometrics, nowadays it is applied into different fields of knowledge. In tourism, the semantic differential method can be used to multiple objectives and purposes, for instance, applying it to place image, cultural differences and tourist's behaviour and experience (Litvin et al, 2001; Selby, 2004; Kastenholz, 2004; Hosany & Martin, 2012). In this research, the semantic differential in a 1 to 5 scale is used as an approach to understand traveller's perspectives related with accommodation attributes to identify and to understand present and future trends in accommodation services.

III. a When you travel, which type of accommodation you usually choose (at most 2 options)

( ) hotel; ( ) resort; ( ) rented apartments and houses; ( ) house of family and friends; ( ) motels; ( ) hostels; ( ) camping

III. b Where are you going to stay in your next holidays? (You may choose up to 2 options)

( ) hotel; ( ) resort; ( ) rented apartments and houses; ( ) house of family and friends; ( ) motels; ( ) hostels; ( ) camping

III. c Characteristics of a great tourist accommodation

	1	2	3	4	5	
Calm and relaxed atmosphere						Fun and social atmosphere
Just to sleep						Offer a set of activities
Homely and welcoming						Modern and cool
Formal treatment						Informal treatment
Simpler and cheaper						More expensive but offer more services
Few technological resources						Many technological resources

Part IV divides the respondents between those who have had or had not a hostel experience and goes further on specific preferences regarding hostels. Item c is an open question while others are multiple choice.

IV. a Have you ever stayed in a hostel?

( ) Yes (If yes, go to IV. d)

( ) No

IV. b Would you like to stay in a hostel?

( ) Yes (go to IV. g)

( ) No

IV. c If not, why? (go to part VI)

[Open question]

IV. d How many times (approximately) have you stayed in hostels?

( ) 1-3 times; ( ) 4-10 times; ( ) 11-20 times; ( ) + than 20 times

IV. e Do you usually stay in hostels when you travel:(Select all options that apply):

( ) with family; ( ) as a couple; ( ) on your own; ( ) with friends

IV. f In which type of destination do you usually stay when you're in a hostel?

( ) rural; ( ) beach; ( ) urban

IV. g What are the main reasons which would/make you choose a hostel as accommodation?

( ) Environment of interactions; ( ) Environment of interactions; ( ) Price; ( ) Young atmosphere; ( ) Fun; ( ) Theme (surf hostel, wine hostel, cinema hostel...); ( ) Parties; ( ) Included services; ( ) Informal service; ( ) To meet new people; ( ) Multicultural atmosphere; Simple services; ( ) To learn with other guests; ( ) Innovative design.

Part V was answered by those who responded positively to the item IV.a and consists specifically in the dimensions of the positive hostel experience. The items were measured in a 5-point Likert scale and are mainly adapted for previous instruments used in the studies of Knutson et al (2009) and Walls (2013). Additionally, this part of the questionnaire was improved based on the literature review and complemented by the qualitative findings of chapter 7.

EMOTIONAL					
A positive experience in a hostel ...	1	2	3	4	5
Changes my mood positively					
Makes me feel safe and comfortable					
Makes me feel at home					
Makes me feel fun and adventurous					
Makes me feel happy					
Makes me feel relaxed					
COGNITIVE					
When I choose a hostel I...	1	2	3	4	5
want fast and simple services					
want to learn with other guests					
want to be sure that everything is clean					
want to be sure that it has a good value for money					
SENSORIAL					
I like when in a hostel...	1	2	3	4	5
the temperature is pleasant					
there is a nice background music					
there is no noise					
I see beautiful landscapes					
design and decoration have a good sense of aesthetics					
I try local flavours					
SOCIAL					
I like when in a hostel I can...	1	2	3	4	5
interact with people					
share the spaces					
make new friends					
share moments with new fellows					
listen to other guest's stories					
feel part of the travellers' community					
take part in social activities (such as: tours, dinners, pub crawls)					
ATMOSPHERE					

I like when the hostel's atmosphere is....	1	2	3	4	5
fun/party					
Calm					
Comfortable					
unique and authentic					
homely and welcoming					
friendly and social					
CLEANLINESS					
I appreciate when the hostel ...	1	2	3	4	5
is organized					
is clean					
OTHER GUESTS					
I like when other travellers...	1	2	3	4	5
are friendly					
are open-minded					
are fun and like to party					
are communicative and outgoing					
have common interests with me					
are from different nationalities					
VALUE FOR MONEY					
I appreciate a hostel that...	1	2	3	4	5
has a fair price					
additional services have a good value for money					
offers additional services included in the fee (ex. breakfast, towels, etc.)					
SAFETY					
I appreciate when the hostel ('s) ...	1	2	3	4	5
facilities make me feel safe					
provide security to my belongings (luggage and personal belongings)					
is in a safe neighbourhood					
SUPPLEMENTARY SERVICES					
I like when the hostel...	1	2	3	4	5
offers tours and pub crawls					
has a bar					
offers included breakfast					
organizes social events					
has good Wi-Fi					
offers fast and simple check-in					
STAFF					
I like when the hostel's staff...	1	2	3	4	5
is nice and welcoming					
is helpful and do what they can to solve my problems					
shows that they care and looks after me					
treats me friendly					
is cool					
is professional					
is knowledgeable and provide information					
DESIGN AND DECORATION					
I appreciate when the hostel...	1	2	3	4	5
has a nice architecture					
is well planned and designed					
is modern					
has an attractive indoor decoration					
has a homely and welcoming design					

FACILITIES					
I appreciate when the hostel's...	1	2	3	4	5
facilities (rooms, bathrooms, common areas) are functional and well-planned					
bedrooms are comfortable					
has a kitchen for me to cook my own meals					
has common areas where I can socialize with other guests					
has clean bathrooms					
LOCATION					
I like when the hostel...	1	2	3	4	5
is near the main tourist attractions					
is close to public transportation					
is close to nightlife					
is in a nice neighbourhood					

Part VI inquires respondents about their demographic profile, considering gender, age group, level of education, background area and country of origin.

VI. a Gender

( ) Male; ( ) Female

VI. b Age Group

( ) less than 18; ( ) 18-24; 25-30; ( ) 31-40; more than 41

VI. c Level of education

( ) Elementary School; ( ) High School; ( ) Bachelor/Degree; ( ) Master; ( ) PhD/Post Doc

VI. d Background Area

( ) Sciences; ( ) Engineering's; ( ) Arts and Humanities

VI. e Country of origin

|Open question|

### 3.3.4.2 Statistical data analysis

Statistics is a mathematical instrument needed to collect, organize, analyse and interpret data (Pestana and Gageiro, 2000). It is used both in observational studies and in experiments to model randomness and uncertainty to estimate or enable the prediction of future phenomenon. According to Li (2012), statistical testing is one of the key tasks in quantitative tourism research and could be conducted through a sort of different approaches. For this research, the statistical analysis was run with the support of SPSS 24 software and was based on several tests and analysis, as following:

#### 3.4.4.2.1 Descriptive analysis

The descriptive analyses focus on the study of non-uniform characteristics of units observed or experienced such as people, cities, families, etc. Descriptive statistics describe data through indicators such as: means, mode, and standard deviation (Pestana and Gageiro, 2000).

#### *3.4.4.2.2 Chi-square test*

The Chi-Square test of independence is used to determine if there is a significant relationship between two nominal variables. If the calculated value of the Chi-Square test is greater than the p value, we will accept the null hypothesis. If the calculated value is less than the p value, then we will reject the null hypothesis. In this research, we assumed that if  $p < 0.05$  it is significant (Pestana and Gageiro, 2000).

#### *3.4.4.2.3 t-tests*

The t-tests assesses whether the means of two groups are statistically different from each other (Pestana and Gageiro, 2000). In this research, independent t-tests were applied in order to find statistical significance comparing two groups: travellers that usually stay in hostels ( $n=255$ ) and those who don't ( $n=344$ ). As assumptions for significance it is used the Kolmogorov – Smirnov ( $\text{sig} < 0.05$ ) test because both samples are higher than 30.

#### *3.4.4.2.4 Exploratory factor analysis*

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) aims to identify a smallest set of hypothetical variables through an initial larger set (Pereira and Patrício, 2016). In this thesis, it is used as a tool to refine the instrument used in the quantitative phase of the study aiming to give more robustness to the theoretical model.

#### *3.4.4.2.5 Multiple regressions*

Multiple linear regression is a predictive analysis which is used to explain the relationship between one dependent variable and a set of independent variables (Pestana and Gageiro, 2000). In the thesis, this technique is used to derive quantitatively the impact of the extracted latent variables (from EFA) as enhancers of a positive hostel experience. For this, eight hypotheses (H1...H8) were tested based on the eight extracted components.

For this specific test, the level of confidence assumed was not limited to 99% or 95% as most authors suggest ( $\text{sig} < 0.05$  or  $0.01$ ). In turn, this study assumes to broaden the confidence intervals considering that those values are standard errors not the only way to data interpretation. As, this is an exploratory study based on mixed-methods, the statistical phase is here considered more as a complementary step, if statistics should be more supportive to social sciences than limiting. Thus, based on literature review and qualitative findings, the authors assumed that all the independent variables affect the dependent variable even though the independent ones may show different weights.



#### *3.4.4.2.6 Notes about Likert scale and the normality assumption*

In statistical tests the normality is one of the main assumptions to define the use of parametric and non-parametric tests. In general terms, parametric tests can be applied if a normal distribution is observed while non-parametric tests can be an alternative if data is not normally distributed. However, it is an issue continuously discussed by the scientific community, as some state that it is relevant to see whether data are close to normal distribution, while for others the violations of normality in the outcome may not be an issue (still under some conditions).

In social sciences, one of the central points of discussion is the use of the so-called Likert scale, the most adopted in research (Silva Junior & Costa, 2014). In theory, Likert- scale does not satisfy any of the requirements of parametric statistics, including data normality since it generates ordinal data. Silva Junior & Costa (2014) explain that this difficulty exists because the definition of points in a specific scale (from 1 to 5 for example) generates discrete variables and the intermediate references between these points are lost (interval between 3 and 4 cannot be measured). Moreover, the authors analyse that 'even with adequate statistical procedures for the operation of discrete variables, these problems persist due to the violation of assumptions of conventionally applied parametric approaches, such as the confirmatory factor analysis that assumes that the variables are continuous and normally distributed' (Silva Junior & Costa, 2014, p. 6).

However, some authors sustain the violation of data normality assumption by stating that for a large population many phenomena approximate a normal distribution curve (Lumley et al, 2002; Schimider et al, 2010). Nevertheless, some assumptions need to be considered if parametric tests are applied and data normality is rejected: (1) preferably a  $n$  higher than 100 (Lumley et al, 2002); (2) increase the number of items to measure a construct as it needs to have more than one item (Silva Junior & Costa, 2014), (3) have a Likert-scale with more than 3 points (Pestana and Gageiro, 2000). Considering those assumptions, some parametric tests were run based on those conditions and in Lumley et al, (2002, p.151) sentence that 'it is widely but incorrectly believed that the t-test and linear regression are valid only for normally distributed outcomes'. On both tests, their major limitation for inference about associations is not a distributional one but is to detect and estimate a difference in the mean of the outcome and to answer the scientific question at hand.

### **3.4 Challenges and limitations of the research process**

As based on a qualitative and quantitative mixed methods approach, the researcher faced many challenges and limitations that should be mentioned. Firstly, the lack of information regarding hostels in academic and practitioners literature hindered the collection of secondary data. In terms of academic literature, hostels showed to be still an underestimated theme in comparison with other sort of accommodation, with only few papers and books approaching hostels in theory.

Beyond that it was encountered barriers to characterize the market, because most of the data found was scarce and disperse. As hostels seem to be a very recent phenomenon in terms of economic importance, reports and databases found are mostly superficial and geographically limited. For instance, Portugal have a database of tourism companies registers (RNT) that at the beginning of this study did not specify hostels as a defined category; this scenario changed with the research already under way. On the other hand, in the Brazilian case, the official entities' reports about accommodation, provided information restricted to hotels or including hostels diluted with other sort of accommodation, making it difficult to picture a more realistic market panorama. As an alternative, most of the secondary data research were based in the Hostelword.com database as a way to heterogeneous data, however it is needed to be mentioned that this platform does not represent official data.

The countries chosen for the empirical study were selected based on their relevance for the understanding of the research goal but also as a requirement of the funding entity. Initially a larger number of cases planned to be analysed, especially in Portugal, however considering the limitation of time and resources, the number needed to be restricted. In Brazil the geographical distance was specifically a challenge to overpass too. Additionally, for the ethnographic fieldwork, the costs associated with trip and stay hindered a longer data collection time. The solution was then to reduce the geographic area to be studied, although contemplating both countries and to reduce the length of stay in hostels.

Many of the limitations of the research concern the application of the instrument and its subsequent analysis. As the experience is a very personal and subjective matter it was no easy to measure it through current social science studies scales. For instance, firstly, it was considered that the question on Likert scale should have been seven-point to give more robustness to the instrument, however, it was found that less points were needed to make the questionnaire easy to understand for the respondents.

The question on to what extent a questionnaire in fact measures the consumer experience is a subject discussed in the literature and was also a concern of the author. One of the solutions to overpass this challenge was to include several questions on the instrument beyond the Likert scale, e.g. multiple choices, open questions and differential semantics, besides supporting the results of the thesis also in methods and qualitative analyses.

Furthermore, there were challenges associated with the online approach of the research. In what concerns the netnographic data, it facilitates the access to customers' experience (available online), however it does not allow a more in-depth overview, as interviews do,

for instance. Regarding the online surveys, the access to a wider range of population showed to be a benefit that bringing with it some intrinsically challenges. Reaching a considerable number of respondents was very time consuming due to the low response rates. Thus, an effort has been made to overcome this situation, in the case of hostels, with personal e-mails and for travellers, with reposting and personal contact with moderators of the selected groups.

It is worth to mention that in the online context the most positive feedbacks came from the groups that had their moderators or digital influencers supporting in the need of answering the questionnaire. Beyond that, engaging respondents with some type of reward<sup>5</sup> showed to be a successful strategy as it stimulates respondents to share the questionnaire with their peers and in addition increased the response rate. Finally, the main limitation of the methodology applied consisted in its exploratory character. As those studies result in a range of causes and alternative options, they cannot be interpreted exclusively as conclusive, however this thesis intends to open doors for further studies that will be able to apply confirmatory tests and analysis.

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<sup>5</sup> This reward consisted of a draw of an air ticket voucher from a low-cost airline, which was supported with personal funding.



## CHAPTER 4 Data Analysis and Findings: The hostel market - Evidence from Brazil and Portugal

In the context of tourism, accommodation functions as a barometer for that activity and used to surf the wave of travel growth. As one of the pillars of hospitality and tourism, accommodation must be studied going deeper in the understanding of tourism futures. In chapter 4, in both cases, Brazilian and Portuguese markets are used as evidence for the study of the hostels' panorama. The results presented are based on the documental analysis (phase I) of secondary data and from the survey applied to the hostels (phase IV).

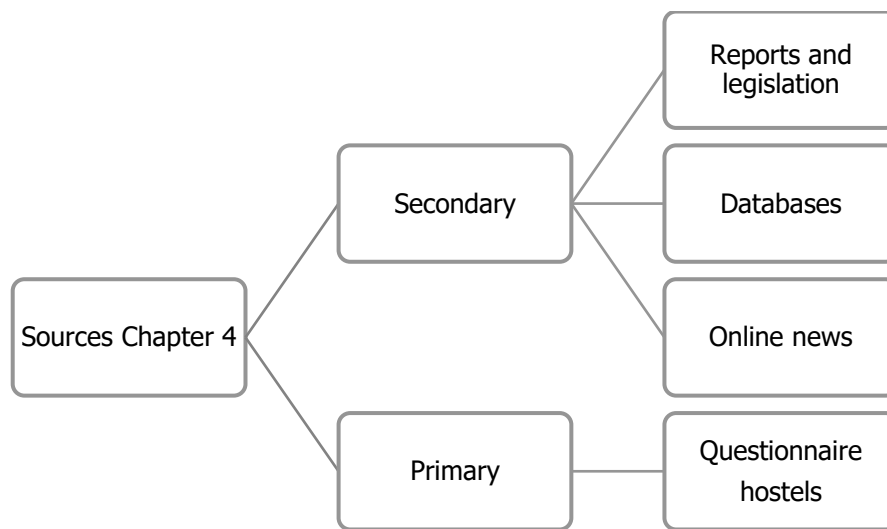


Figure 28 Sources chapter 4

### 4.1 Sample

The documental analysis was based on secondary data of various types of sources, namely, online media articles, reports, databases and legislation. News was searched on Google platform, within keywords "hostel" or "albergue" or "pousada da juventude". The chosen time range for news referred to the last ten years (2007-2016). However, it was identified that hostels appeared as a relevant subject from 2011. As a result, 175 articles were analysed, 46% of them from Portuguese sources and 54% from Brazilian ones. The articles were published in Brazilian sources as: UOL, Exame, Globo, Viajequi, Catraca Livre, Terra, and others, while in Portugal the articles were mainly from Jornal de Notícias, Visão, Expresso, Público, Observador, and NiT.

Worldwide tourism industry information was collected from official entities reports such as WTTC, UNWTO and World Economic Forum. Specific information about Portuguese and Brazilian industry was consulted from local entities publishings, namely Brazilian Tourism Ministry and Tourism of Portugal. In an attempt to go further on hospitality industry information about both countries, accommodation legislation as well as public databases were analysed, such as INE, RNT and IBGE. Moreover, to reach specific

information concerning hostels, hostelworld database and reports were the main sources extensively analysed.

Along with documental analysis, the results from the **survey applied to hostels** were also analysed. From that survey 113 valid questionnaires were received, 68 from Brazilian hostels and 44 from Portuguese hostels, which consisted in a response rate of 12% from Brazilian universe and 13% from Portuguese. From Brazilian respondents, 50 hostels are located in Sudeste, in destinations such as: Rio de Janeiro, Buzios and São Paulo; 22 in Nordeste (e.g. Salvador, Recife, Fortaleza); 22 in Sul (e.g. Florianópolis, Porto Alegre, Foz do Iguaçu); 4 in Norte and 1 in Centro- Oeste. From the Portuguese sample 12 respondents were hostels from Lisbon, 11 from Algarve, 7 from Porto and Norte; 7 from Centro; 3 from Alentejo; 2 from Açores and 2 from the Madeira Islands. This sample cannot be considered a statistically representative universe but is still suitable for the exploratory purposes of the research.

## 4.2 Brazilian and Portuguese contexts

Brazil is a country with an estimated population of 208 million people and a large territory. It is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest country in the globe, with 8.5 million km<sup>2</sup> (IBGE, 2017). Different from European destinations, most of the touristic mobility inside Brazil is due to the domestic visitors, as their own country is the destination chosen by 90% of national tourists (Governo do Brasil, 2016).

In terms of international tourists, Brazil used to receive an average of 5 million international visitors. But in the last 4 years, as the site of mega-events, such as Confederations Cup (2013), World FIFA World Cup (2014) and Olympic Games (2016), that number increased for 6.6 million international tourists in 2016, generating 6 billion dollars for the country (Governo do Brasil, 2017; Ministério do Turismo, 2017a).

However, those numbers are far below from the leading countries. For instance, France received 82.6 million international visitors in 2015, while developing countries such as Mexico, received 35 million or Thailand 32.5 million (UNWTO, 2015). Still, tourism is important because it represents 3.2% of Brazilian GDP and influences a circulation of about 151 billion dollars through direct and indirect activities in that country (WTTC, 2017a).

On the other hand, Portugal is a country with estimated population of 10.3 million people (INE, 2016a) and a territory of 92 thousand km<sup>2</sup> but that plays an important role in tourism. Portugal receives about 11.4 million international visitors per year and more 7.6 million are national visitors (INE, 2016b). Beyond that, according to the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness index Portugal is in the 14<sup>th</sup> position among the most competitive destinations in the world (World Economic Forum, 2017).

Portugal sustained in the tourism to overcome the economic crisis of 2008 and take the lead in tourism and travel. Nowadays, travel and tourism represent a total contribution to employment of 19.6 percent and direct contribution to GDP of 6.4 %, which generated

13.3 billion dollars in 2016. Still, it is estimated that the activity will grow 2 to 3% per year (WTTC, 2017b).

#### 4.2.1 Hostels in numbers

It is estimated that Brazil is ready to accommodate 2.4 million people simultaneously, but just a small part of this offer is from hostels. According to the hostelworld.com database, **there are approximately 579 hostels** in Brazil (figure 29). 13 of them are located in the Norte region, 19 in Centro-Oeste, 107 in the Sul, 135 in Nordeste and the majority of hostels (305) are located in Sudeste, in which the city of Rio de Janeiro highlights as the destination with the higher number of hostels (123 properties), concentrating 21 percent of the offering for the whole country (Hostelworld, 2016b).

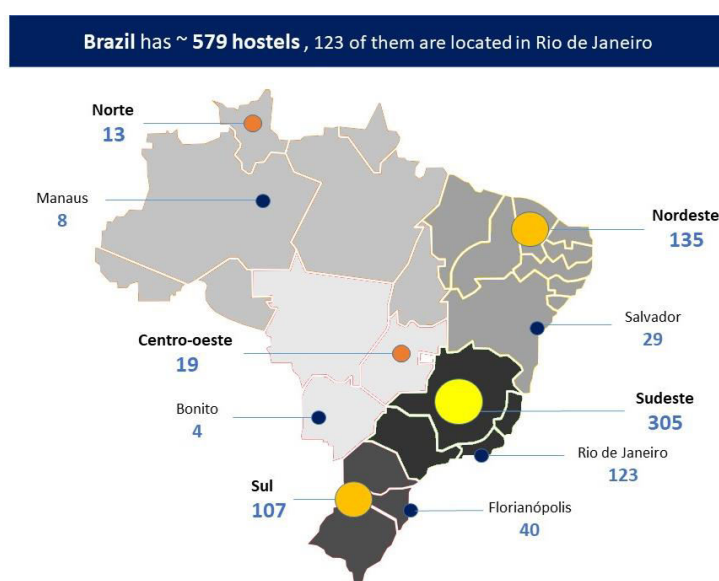


Figure 29 Number of hostels in Brazil  
Source: Hostelworld.com (2016b)

Brazilian official data show that there was an increase of 15% from 2011 to 2016 in the tourist accommodation offering in the main urban centres. This increase is justified by the fact that Brazil was the site of important megaevents in the last years, namely the FIFA World Cup in 2014, involving games in twelve cities all over the country (Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Porto Alegre, Brasília, Cuiabá, Curitiba, Fortaleza, Manaus, Natal, Recife e Salvador) and the Olympics, which occurred in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 (Ministério do Turismo, 2017b).

Accordingly, the number of hostels seemed to follow this trend. The results of our survey applied to hostels (n=68) show that the creation of many hostels contributed to the increase of the accommodation offering in Brazil. Especially in the last seven years, the curve of hostels properties was ascending (figure 30), and a high number of hostels began their activity in the year of 2014 (26 properties).

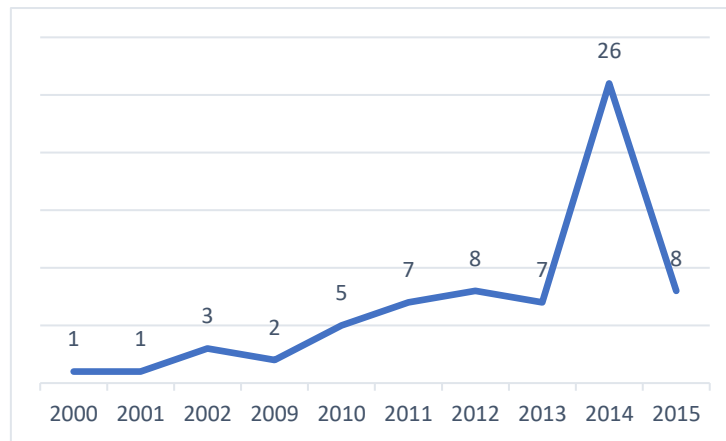


Figure 30 Starting of activity year vs. number of hostels in Brazil n=68

The results of hostel's survey also suggest that in terms of size and capacity, Brazilian hostels are varied. The biggest hostel offers 56 rooms and 450 beds while the smallest offers 3 rooms and 8 beds. However, not considering those outliers, on average, **hostels in Brazil are of medium size with 7 rooms and 32 beds**. Their price varies from 240-30 reais in high season to 25-190 for a bed in low season. **But on average, the price round 57 reais (approximately 16 euros) in high season and 42 reais (12 euros) in low season.**

It is estimated that Portugal can accommodate a total of 763.054 people simultaneously. And although AL's (e.g. short-term rentals) are more in number of establishments, they represent 41 percent of total Portuguese capacity while touristic enterprises (e.g. hotels) accommodate 59 percent. In this context, **hostels contribute with 2 percent of Portuguese tourist accommodation offering** (Turismo de Portugal, 2017a).

According to Hostelworld database **there are 336 hostels in Portugal** (figure 31), which are distributed in 7 touristic regions. 7 of them are in Açores; 6 in Madeira; 4 in Alentejo; 53 in Porto and the Norte; 56 in Centro, 66 in Algarve and 136 in Lisboa and Tejo area. Just the city of Lisbon, as the capital and main tourist city center, concentrates almost 30% of the offer for the whole country, with 100 hostels (Hostelworld, 2016c).



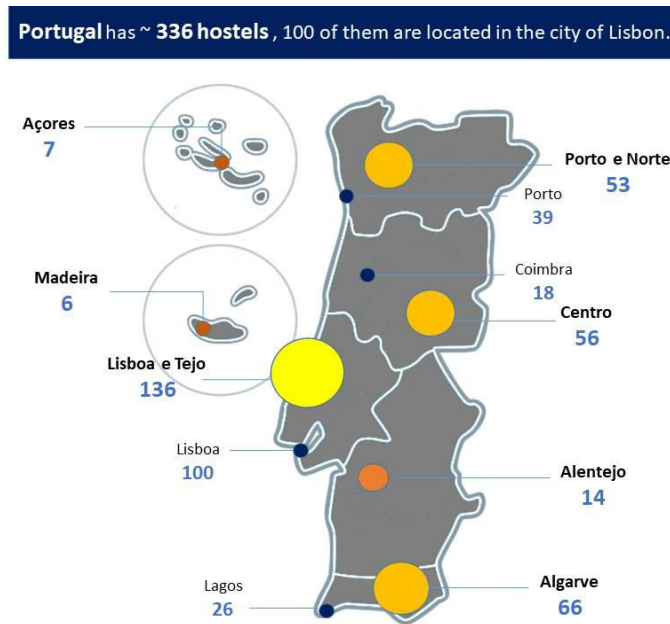


Figure 31 Number of hostels in Portugal

Source: Hostelworld.com (2016c)

Since 2009 there has been a qualification/upgrade in the Portuguese accommodation sector followed by the increasing in accommodation capacity. These changes concern especially 4 and 5 stars hotels and local accommodation, in which hostels are included (Turismo de Portugal, 2017d). According to RNT, there were 87 licenses for hostels in 2013 for Portugal and until October 2017 they are already 494, this confirms that hostels follow the lead of tourism growth.

Accordingly, the results of the survey applied to Portuguese hostels (n=44) suggest that many hostels started their activity in the last five years (figure 32). **Most of hostels were created in the year of 2014.** This increase can be explained because in that year the legislation facilitated the access of different types of accommodation to the legal frame of AL.

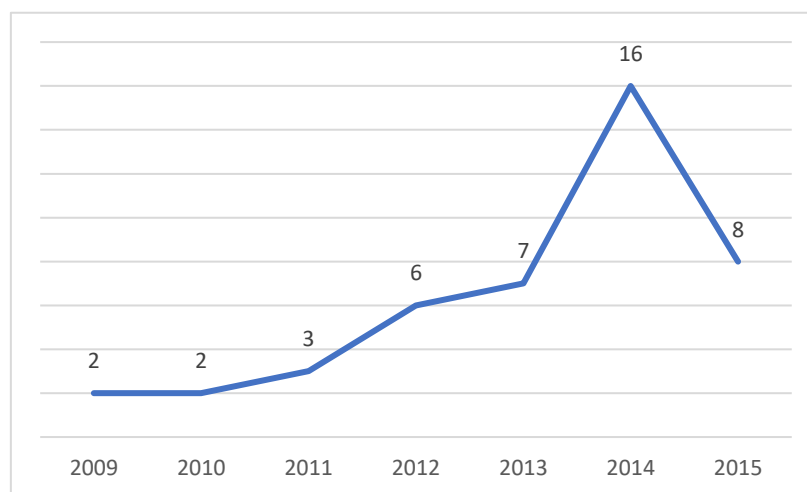


Figure 32 Starting of activity year vs. number of hostels n=44

Moreover, according to the responses, **Portuguese hostels are medium size and offer an average of 9 rooms and 33 beds.** And they also **charge an average of 21€ in high season and 16€ in low season.**

#### *4.2.2 Legislation*

**Brazil legally classifies the types of accommodation through the Brazilian System of Accommodation Classification (SBClass).** The SBClass was created in 2011 by the Ministerial order no.100, June, 16 to regulate the processes and criteria of Brazilian Accommodation (Ministério do Turismo, 2017c). It defines seven types of accommodation (Ministério do Turismo, 2017d):

- Hotel - Establishment with reception service, temporary accommodation, serving food or not, offered in individual units and for the exclusive use of the guest, for a daily charge.
- Resort - Hotel with leisure and entertainment infrastructure that include also beauty services, physical activities, recreation and on-premise involvement with nature;
- Farm- hotel: Located in a rural environment, equipped with agricultural and livestock farming, offering entertainment and experience on the countryside;
- Bed & Breakfast: accommodation in a residence with a maximum of three housing units for tourist use, with breakfast and cleaning services, in which the owner lives in;
- Historic-hotel: Installed in a building preserved in its original or restored form or that has been the scene of historical-cultural facts of recognized importance.
- Inn: Development of a horizontal property, consisting of a maximum of 30 housing units and 90 beds, with reception, food and temporary accommodation services, which can be in a single building with up to three floors or in chalets or bungalows;
- Flat/apartment: Consisting of housing units that have a bedroom, bathroom, living room and equipped kitchen, in a building with integrated administration and commercialization, which has reception service, cleaning and storage.

**SBClass does not legislate about hostels;** in this mode Brazilian hostels are not required to follow any official classification. Instead, to give some cohesion to Brazilian hostels' market, some associations are actively involved. Hostelling International Brazil is the oldest association with about 100 hostels (HI Hostels Brasil, 2017) affiliated. And in 2016, November the Association of Hostels and New Accommodation started having with 6 affiliated (ABHostels, 2017). Those associations are important to the hostels activity but do not prosecute any national rule. At the most they refer some hostels good practices and guidelines, which are mainly restricted to their members and are not obligatory.

Portugal in terms of legislation, divide their accommodation in touristic enterprises<sup>6</sup> and local accommodation (Turismo de Portugal, 2017a). Hostels are framed in the regime of local accommodation, according to law decree 128/2014 (Decreto-Lei n.º 128/2014, de 29 de agosto) (Turismo de Portugal, 2017b). This decree approved the legal regime ruling the operation of local accommodation (AL) establishments<sup>7</sup>. The creation of these rules, although recent, was needed as a form of regulation, especially due to the pressures of shared economy platforms such as Airbnb that boosted the new types of accommodation in Portugal since 2013.

ALs have as maximum capacity nine rooms and 30 users except for hostels that do not have maximum capacity (Turismo de Portugal, 2017 c). Still, as in the decree of 2014 the particularities of hostels were not well-defined and needed some adjustments, a new decree was launched in 2015. Therefore, as the Decree-Law no. 63/2015 of 23 April established, the hostel regime was strengthened (Turismo de Portugal, 2017b) and since then hostels are considered **the tourist accommodation in which most of rooms are dormitories. Also, they must** follow other guidelines, such as (Turismo de Portugal, 2017 c):

- The dormitories must have ventilation and direct lighting from the exterior through a window;
- In the dormitories there must be an individual locker per guest with a locking system and a minimum dimension of 55cm X 40cm X 20cm;
- The hostel shall have common social spaces, a kitchen and a dining area for use and free access by guests.
- Sanitary facilities may be common to several rooms or dormitories and be mixed or separated by gender.

Additionally, the Portuguese Association of Local Accommodation (ALEP) represents a set of new accommodation forms, such as apartment and short-term rentals, but they are not so active in the case of hostels, as they represent a small part of its members (ALEP, 2017).

### *4.2.3 Guests' profile*

The survey applied to hostels unveiled some aspects of the hostels' guests profile, namely to characterize their target. In Brazil, as previously mentioned, most of tourists are from the domestic market. This dynamic also reflect on hostels, as according to our survey, **60% of Brazilian hostels' guests are national tourists**. Only in some more internationalized destinations, such as Rio de Janeiro, the percentage of international tourists are higher.

Still, some countries can be highlighted as main international targets for Brazilian hostels. Beyond the domestic visitors most of those who visit Brazil are from Latin America and

<sup>6</sup> Free translation of the Portuguese term *empreendimentos turísticos*, in which are included touristic villages, habitation tourism, agricultural tourism, farms, rural-hotels, hotels, apartment-hotel, inns, camping/caravan parks).

<sup>7</sup> Free translation of the Portuguese term *alojamento local* (AL), in which include apartments, houses, hostels and hosting accommodation

North America. Argentina is the main emissary country followed by USA, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay. Additionally, some European countries are also important emissary markets to Brazil, namely, France, Germany, Italy, England, Portugal and Spain (Ministério do Turismo, 2017a). In the case of hostels, survey's responses are in consonance and suggest that the main emissary countries for hostels are: France, Germany, Argentina, USA, Chile, Spain, Australia, Netherlands, Israel, Italy, Uruguay and England.

**In the case of Portuguese hostels**, most of their guests are international, as according to their response, **80 % of the guests are from other countries**. Just in some destinations, such as: Azores, Gerês and Figueira da Foz, for instance, the proportion on domestic tourists is higher. This may happen because those destinations have a strong appeal to the domestic tourists.

Moreover, the main international markets for Portuguese hostels are: Spain, Germany, France, Brazil, Netherlands, Italy, USA, Belgium, Canada, Australia, Northern Europe and Asian countries (such as South Korea, Japan and China). Those markets are in consonance with the Portuguese Tourism Strategic Plan 2027 (Turismo de Portugal, 2017d), once Spain, Germany, France, Brazil and the Netherlands, Scandinavian tourists are considered main markets for Portugal. United States are considered a market of interest for the country. Italy, Belgium and Canada are markets in development for Portugal. Australia and China are considered potential markets but difficult to reach, however, apparently, hostels know how to captive them.

For one thing, what both Brazilian and Portuguese hostels have in common is that their targets are similar in terms of age range. According to the respondents 82% of Brazilian hostels' guests are between 25 to 30 years old while 73% of Portuguese respondents are at that same age range. In second place are the 31-40 years old guests, which represent 10% of Brazilian target and 16% of the Portuguese. This information is in line with the survey applied to hostels guests (further described in chapter 6) and with some other studies which identify that backpackers or who stay in hostels are not only 'teens' but also more mature young people (Hecht and Martin, 2006; Hostelworld, 2016a).

### **4.3 Are hostels 'trendy'? An analysis of hostels on the media**

New types of accommodation, shared economy, new shapes of hotels (e.g. lifestyle and design hotels) and contemporary requirements of tourism market are current themes in tourism discourse. And the hostels, although they have been around for long time, are mostly included in that 'box' of new types of accommodation. Throughout this chapter the particularities of Brazil and Portugal cases studies will be described.

But what are the main issues concerning those markets? And what can be learnt from them? In this vein, several topics will be analysed here, starting from the approach media gave to hostels on those countries, their legislation concerning that type of accommodation and other crucial aspects as such: numbers on market growth, capacity, size, the price they charge and the type of guests they attract. All those issues are analysed to give tracks on a further analysis of hostels.

Firstly, as academic literature sometimes suffers from a lack in communication with the practical world, media coverage analysis is used as a source for beyond the academic articles. As they generally refer to several issues which are considered in vogue, general media can be an important thermometer to measure trends in the sector. Therefore, in this section, media articles are used to identify to what extent hostels undergo a rapid increase in public interest or attention. The analysis of the Brazilian and Portuguese news is presented as a complement to characterize the background of hostel's market in those countries.

Comparing Brazilian and Portuguese media (figure 33), it was verified how hostels are on the spot in both countries and are increasing in terms of mentions in general media. In Brazil, the number of news related with hostels increased from 2 in 2011 to 29 in 2016, while in Portugal the number went from 1 in 2011 to 38 in 2016. For both, 2014 was a turning point year as more news were published compared to previous years. Although, in 2016, more news were published about hostels in Portugal than in Brazil.

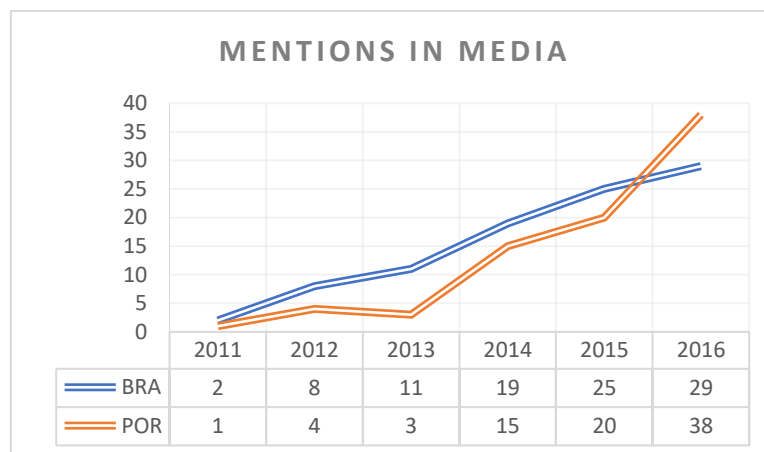


Figure 33 Number of news mentioning hostels, by country. Brazil n= 94; Portugal n= 81

Media approaches several issues concerning hostels (table 17), but above all, it highlights the increasing power of the industry in both countries. In Portugal, 48 percent of news refer to that topic, while 40% of Brazilian news are about that issue. The launching of new properties is in the core of the expansion of the industry. In Portugal referring to new properties that opened in: Lisbon, Center Region, Porto and the North and Algarve, respectively with 10, 7, 7 and 2 new hostels. And in Brazil with new hostels in Southeast (6), Northeast (6), Centre (2), South (1).

Table 17 The issues of Portuguese and Brazilian hostels on the media n=81

<b>Portuguese Issues</b>	<b>No. news</b>	<b>Brazilian Issues</b>	<b>No. news</b>
► The power of the hostels (48%)		► Increasing of the Industry (40%)	
Opening of new properties	26	New properties	15
Expansion	4	Expansion	6
Data	5	Data	12
Entrepreneurship	2	Entrepreneurship	2
Investments	2	Investment	3
► Legislation/certification (17%)	14	► Trends (31%)	
► Positive vs. Negative impacts (14%)	6	Events	8
Hostels preserving heritage	6	Design	6
Hostels contributing to 'touristification'	5	Eco/Sustainable	5
► Recognition on tourism market (12%)	10	Experiences	4
► Hostels' Trends (9%)		Slum	3
Posh hostels		Gay friendly	1
Design & Boutique	3	Bicycle	1
For women	2	Boutique	1
For seniors	1	► Hostels as alternative accommodation (14%)	
Total	81	Value for money benefits	9
		Fit for Millennials	4
		► Recognition of the market (12%)	11
		► Legislation/certification (3%)	3
			94

Beyond that, hostels are remembered on general news for being means for entrepreneurship and a good source of investment. In Portugal, news shows some examples of entrepreneurs that sustained in tourism market to overpass the economic crisis. While in Brazil, hostels are pictured as an opportunity for profitable investment due to the increasing number of tourist's resultant of megaevents.

In addition, some official government data is published. In Brazil, the focus is on the growth of public investments in tourism and to expand the number of beds in the whole country. In Portugal the main concern is about local accommodation contribution (in which hostels are included), confirming that hostels are important to the public sector once they endorse the Portuguese tourism infrastructure and reach some specific targets.

Additionally to those issues, hostels are always remembered for being considered a 'trendy' type of accommodation that adapt to several targets and 9% of Portuguese news approach this aspect. Posh hostels, design and boutique hostels or even hostels planned for women and for seniors and are thought of on Portuguese media as a bet for the lodging of the future. In turn, in Brazilian media 31% of the news is regarding those trends of the market.

Beyond the boutique and design hostels, through the news it is possible to identify that Brazilian market is oriented to a sort of niches, creating hostels such as: gay friendly, bicycle, eco and sustainable themed hostels. From those examples, one interesting investment is on slum hostels that seemed to get an increasing interest especially from international tourists.

Another aspect of Brazilian hostels highlighted on news are the events and experiences they offer to a broader public. Some hostels offer parties, pubs and some cultural agenda on their facilities in order to attract not only guests but also residents. In this mode, they enhance the interaction between tourists and locals and either secures a way to overpass the seasonality.

Some of the things that the media analysis brings to light is how Brazilian and Portuguese markets are not comparable. They are in different stages of development, as such is recurrently the discourse of Brazilian media and the appeal to this 'new market' is more concerning, while in Portugal the discourse already includes the impacts of hostels market expansion.

For instance, 14% of Brazilian news present hostels as an accommodation alternative and that is not so in people's mind, for this, they stress some 'values' of staying in a hostel such as, good value for money or their appeal to Millennials public. On the other hand, in Portugal 14% of the news refer to the positive impacts of the hostels but also approach the negative ones. In that context, hostels are remembered as an important tool to preserve the heritage, as the construction of new hostels support many times the city regeneration, especially on historical or iconic buildings. However, that same boost of the market increases what media calls as 'touristification' or how the places turn into touristic-oriented spaces. In this context, problems such as real estate speculation and negative impacts to locals are mentioned on news associated with hostels. Those are issues, that at least until now, Brazil does not have to face.

Beyond that compared to Brazil, or even other European countries, Portuguese hostels' market can be considered more mature, as it is gaining more and more recognition worldwide. Media reflect this, once 12% of the news refers to the awards they have won for their high quality in services. But Brazil despite of not being so internationalized is also gaining some importance for the quality of their hostels. 12% of the Brazilian news is concerning this market consolidation, once some hostels are considered the best in Latin America.

Both Brazilian and Portuguese hostels are certainly gaining traction in the market, but all this expansion, not only for hostels but for other type of emerging tourist accommodation forms, aroused the need of a stricter legislation regarding that activity. This topic seems to be more recurring for Portuguese than for Brazilian hostels as 17% of Portuguese news concern legislation and certification of hotels, while in turn 3% of Brazilian news reflects that. This topic reiterates the degree of development of both markets however, both legislations regarding hostels are described in detail on topic 5.2 of this chapter.

### *Summary Chapter 4*

- Tourism represents 3.2% of Brazilian GDP and influences a circulation of about 151 billion dollars among direct and indirect activities. The country received 6.6 million international tourists in 2016, but most of the touristic mobility inside the country is due to domestic visitors. In Portugal tourism contributes to 6.4% of the GDP. Portugal is in the 14<sup>th</sup> position among the most competitive destinations in the world, it receives about 11.4 million international visitors per year and the activity is projected to grow 2 to 3% per year;
- In Brazil and in Portugal hostels seem to be a 'trendy' type of accommodation. In the last 6 years hostels are increasing their presence on the media which is constantly referring to several issues concerning that market. The growth power of this industry and recognition of the market, among other pertinent issues such as legislation and the impacts of this type of accommodation on destinations, seem to be more and more on the spotlight;
- Both Brazilian and Portuguese hostels are certainly gaining traction in the tourism market however they show singularities that need to be highlighted. In terms of legislation, there is a lack in the Brazilian frame because the country does not include hostels in any official accommodation type of classification and does not regulate specific legislation for hostels. On the other hand, since 2014, Portugal framed hostels in the regime of local accommodation, defining that hostels are a type of tourist accommodation in which most of rooms are dormitories. Beyond that hostels on that country must follow other guidelines regarding the ventilation on dormitories, the lockers, the common spaces and the separation by gender on dormitories and sanitary facilities, for instance;
- Hostels found in Brazil and Portugal are a fertile field for growth. In Portugal, the boom happened after the economic crisis in which Portugal found tourism a source to overpass that situation. Associated to that, the decree law approved in 2014 boosted the number of establishments. On the other hand, Brazil surfed the wave of the megaevents, and hostels had its 'boom' especially in the last 5 years. It is important to highlight though, that those local circumstances were important but are also intrinsically connected with global trends, such as the change on traveller's profiles, the low-cost appeal or the increasing power of Millennials on worldwide economy;
- According to the Hostelworld platform it is estimated that in Brazil there are about 579 hostels, while Portugal have 336. In both countries most of hostels are in the urban centres. Rio de Janeiro in Brazil is the city with the major number of hostels, while Lisbon have the largest concentration of hostels in Portugal;
- Brazilian and Portuguese hostels vary in terms of size and price yet, still on average they are similar. In both countries most of hostels are medium sized Brazilian hostels have on average 7 rooms and 32 beds while the Portuguese have 9 rooms and 33 beds. In terms of price, they vary a bit more. Brazilian hostels can be considered cheaper because on average they charge 16 € in high season and 12€ in low season. On the other hand, Portuguese hostels charge on average 21 € in high season and 16€ in low season;
- Brazilian and Portuguese hostels differ in terms of their guests' profile. 60% of Brazilian hostel's guests are from national tourists and the international tourists they receive are mainly from Latin America countries, such as Argentina, Chile



and Paraguay. While 80% of the guests of Portuguese hostels are from foreign countries, especially: Spain, Germany, France and Brazil;

- The point in which Brazilian and Portuguese hostels' guests converge is on age. Most of the people hostels receive are between 25 to 30 years old. 82% of Brazilian hostels' guests are on that range, while 73% of Portuguese guests are between 25 and 30 years old. Beyond that, for both markets there is an increase in guests age, as a significant part of the people which stay in Brazilian and Portuguese hostels are more than thirty years old.



## CHAPTER 5 Data analysis and findings: Learning from the best hostels' practices

Chapter 5 presents the results from ethnographic fieldwork based on the researcher's observation. It has as main goal to describe the singularities of the hostels services in both their dimension. As in one hand it is what hostel offer to the guest on the other hand, what the guests responses are about the service encounters on the hostel-stay. Additionally, the chapter identifies what the hostels analysed do to be well rated on customers' perception and to be considered as top hostels. For this, the chapter is divided in three main sections. It describes the sample analysed in terms of location, price, size, facilities and services and the customer's rating and awards they won. The section 'Insights from the best hostels' narrates in detail the experience of the researcher staying in each one of the five hostels analysed. And the section 'Highlights of the hostel' brings singularities to light that help some hostels to be on the top in their sector.<sup>1</sup>

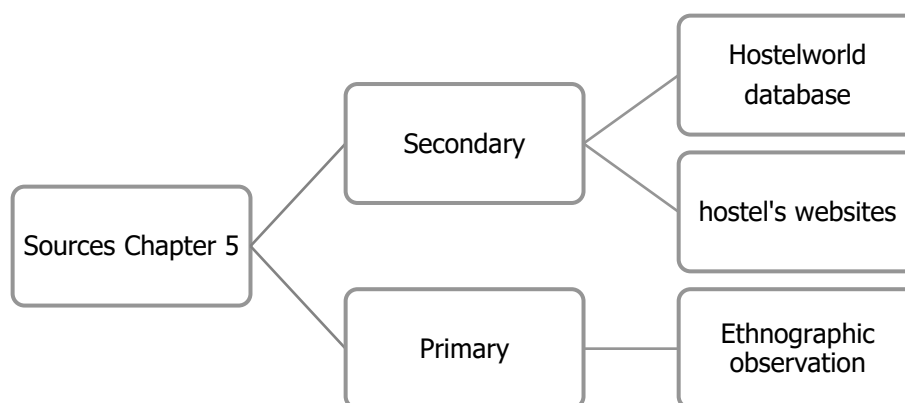


Figure 34 Sources chapter 5

### 5.1 Sample

The sample is based on the results of the ethnographic fieldwork (phase II). In this phase 5 hostels, 2 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and 3 in Lisbon, Portugal were analysed. The totality of the sample is here described in terms of: location, price, size, facilities and services and the customer's rating and awards they won.

#### *5.1.1 Location, price and size*

In Brazil and in Portugal, hostels are situated in central **location** and close to others (figures 35 and 36). In Rio, the hostels are in different neighbourhoods but close to each other, about 700 m distance. Santa Mix is located in Santa Teresa neighbourhood and Discovery in Glória. Both hostels are surrounded by pharmacies, stores, restaurants, public transportation, tourist attractions and traditional neighbourhoods, such as Lapa.

In consonance, hostels in Lisbon are near, located in the old town with easy access to the main tourist attractions and city facilities.

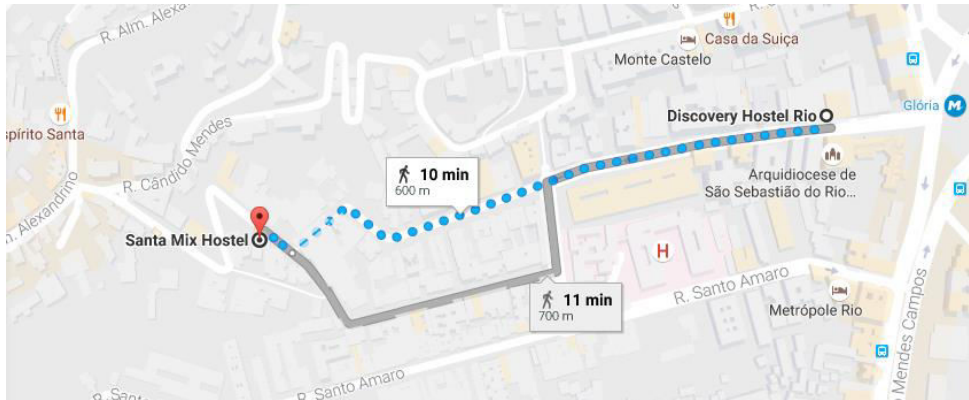


Figure 35 Location of Brazilian Hostels.  
Source: Googlemaps, 2015

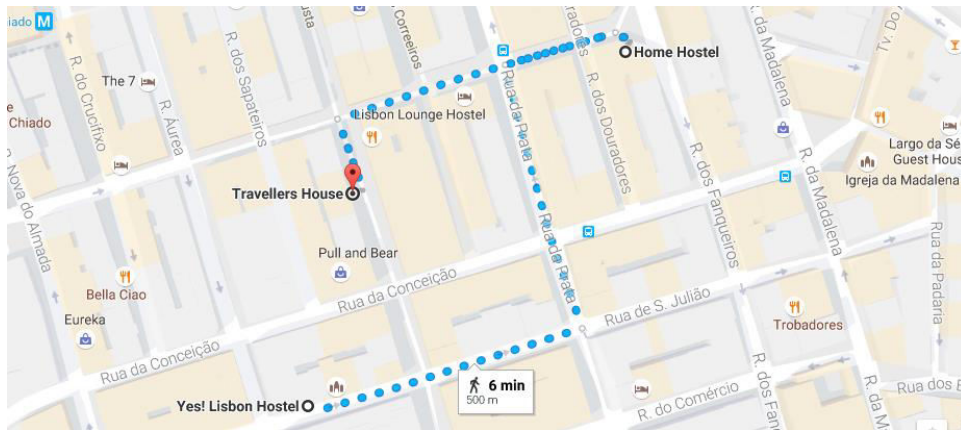


Figure 36 Location of Portuguese hostels.  
Source: Googlemaps, 2014

Concerning the price (table 18) there is a difference, as Brazilian hostels have lower average price 13€, compared to Portuguese hostels 23€. In terms of size, Yes!Lisbon is the biggest with 109 beds while Santa Mix is the smallest with 21 beds.

Table 18 Characterization of hostels: city, price and size

<i>Hostel</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Price*</i>	<i>Size**</i>
Discovery	Rio de Janeiro	16€	21 beds
Santa Mix	Rio de Janeiro	10€	16 beds
Yes! Lisbon	Lisbon	24€	109 beds
Home Lisbon	Lisbon	24€	86 beds
Travellers House	Lisbon	22€	30 beds

\*medium price for a bed, \*\* total number of beds in the hostel

Source: based on Hostelword

### 5.1.2 Facilities and services

All hostels share similarities in their facilities and services (table 19). Brazilian and Portuguese hostels offer to their customers a set of services that attend to their traveller's needs: city maps, wi-fi, 24 hours reception are some of the services that can be achieved in those hostels. Breakfast, linen and luggage storage, in general are offered as additional services, however in the hostels analyzed they are included in the price. Towels are for free only in Travellers House, while in the other hostels it is possible to rent.

Table 19 Facilities and services of hostels

		<i>Discovery</i>	<i>Santa Mix</i>	<i>Yes! Lisbon</i>	<i>Home Lisbon</i>	<i>Travellers House</i>
General Facilities	Breakfast	•	•	•	•	•
	Linen	•	•	•	•	•
	City Maps	•	•	•	•	•
	Wi-Fi	•	•	•	•	•
	24 hour reception	•	•	•	•	•
	24 hours security	•	•	•	•	•
	Luggage storage	•	•	•	•	•
	Housekeeping	•	•	•	•	•
	Towels					•
	Lockers	•	•	•	•	•
	Common Room	•	•	•	•	•
	Parking					
	Air Conditioning	•	•	•	•	•
	Hair Dryers	•		•	•	•
	Terrace	•	•		•	
	Elevator			•		
Additional Services	Laundry	•	•	•	•	•
	Airport transfers	•	•	•	•	•
	Bike for hire	•			•	
	Tours/travel desk	•	•	•	•	•
	Currency exchange	•				
Food & drink	Tea & Coffee Machine	•	•	•	•	•
	Self-Catering	•		•	•	•
	Bar	•		•	•	
	Vending machine	•		•		•
	Barbecue	•	•			
Entertainment	Board Games	•	•	•	•	•
	PlayStation			•		
	Cable TV/DVD's		•	•	•	•

Source: based on Hostelworld.com (2015)

The hostels have particularities in their facilities; there is a terrace, in three hostels (Discovery, Santa Mix and Home Lisbon). which is very appreciated by customers. In terms of accessibility hostels are not adapted, none of them have private parking and only Yes!Lisbon has an elevator. This may happen because most of them are located in antique historical buildings. Most of the hostels offer useful equipments in their facilities, such as: lockers, air conditioning and hair dryers.

All the hostels analysed offer a set of additional services: laundry, airport transfers, tours are presented to customers as options. Discovery Hostel for example also offer the possibility of currency exchange and bike for hire. All of those additional services are charged extra, except from the laundry in Home Lisbon which is for free.

Beyond that the hostels offer different types of entertainment to guests, as board games and TV and DVDs. All the hostels have kitchen and food and drink facilities, Discovery and Santa Mix have an area for barbecue, 3 of the hostels have a bar and 3 offer also vending machines.

### 5.1.3 Rating and Awards

In the hostelworld platform the hostels can be rated by the customers after their stay. Customer have the possibility to evaluate the hostel based on 7 criteria: value for money, security, location, staff, atmosphere, cleanliness and facilities. This rating has a crescent point from 0 to 10. In the case of the hostels analysed, they are all very well-rated with scores above 9 in the global evaluation (table 20).

Table 20 Customer's evaluation about the hostels (0-10 rate)

<b>Items</b>	<b>Discovery Rio</b>	<b>Santa Mix</b>	<b>Yes! Lisbon</b>	<b>Travellers House</b>	<b>Home Lisbon</b>
Value for Money	9.4	9.3	9.7	9.5	9.7
Security	9.5	9.3	9.7	9.7	9.7
Location	9.2	8.3	9.9	9.9	9.9
Staff	9.7	9.3	9.8	9.9	9.9
Atmosphere	9.6	9.4	9.6	9.6	9.8
Cleanliness	9.7	8.9	9.7	9.6	9.8
Facilities	9.3	8.9	9.7	9.5	9.7
Global evaluation	9.5	9.1	9.8	9.7	9.8

Source: based on Hostelworld.com (2015)

The evaluation made by the customers are annually ranked in the hostelworld platform. The Hostelworld Customer Annual Ratings awards (table 21), called HOscars, lists the best hostels in the world as voted by customers. According to the platform, HOSCAR awards, celebrates the best hostels around the globe, mentioning hostel in a ranking by size, country, continent, popularity among other specific categories. In 2017, the 15<sup>th</sup> list was published based on one million reviews from the platform community (Hostelworld, 2017). The hostels analysed in this research are mentioned in the list as following:

Table 21 Hostels' awards

<i>Hostel</i>	<i>Awards</i>
<b>Yes!Lisbon</b>	Best hostel in the world (2013), 2 <sup>nd</sup> best hostel in Europe (2015), Best hostel in Portugal (2013); Best large hostel in the world (2012, 2013); 2 <sup>nd</sup> best large hostel in the world (2014); 3 <sup>rd</sup> best large hostel in the world (2011); 2 <sup>nd</sup> best medium hostel in the world (2015,2017); 4 <sup>th</sup> best medium hostel (2016) Best hostel chain in the world (2017), Best Small Hostel Chain (2012); Best hostel for groups (2012); 2 <sup>nd</sup> best hostel for groups in 2011; Most popular hostel in Lisbon (2012,2013,2014).
<b>Travellers House</b>	The best hostel in the world (2009,2010,2011), 3 <sup>rd</sup> best hostel in the world (2013), 8 <sup>th</sup> best hostel in the world (2008), Best hostel in Europe (2014), Best hostel in Portugal (2009,2010,2011,2012) Best large hostel (2011), Best medium hostel (2012), 2 <sup>nd</sup> best medium hostel (2013, 2014), 3 <sup>rd</sup> best small hostell (2017), 7 <sup>th</sup> best small hostel (2015) Best location (2008, 2009, 2012); Best carachter (2008, 2009,2011, 2012); Most secure hostel (2010, 2011); Best staff (2011, 2012); Most fun hostel (2011,2012).
<b>Home Lisbon</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> best hostel in the world (2012); best hostel in Portugal (2014, 2015, 2016, 2017), Best hostel in Europe (2015), 2 <sup>nd</sup> best hostel in Europe (2014), 3 <sup>rd</sup> best hostel in Europe (2017); 8 <sup>th</sup> best large hostel in the world (2011), 4 <sup>th</sup> best medium hostel (2012), best medium hostel (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017), Best small hostel chain (2012); Cleanest hostel (2014); Most popular hostel (2015, 2016, 2017).
<b>Discovery Rio</b>	Best Hostel in Brazil (2014,2017); Best Hostel in Latin America (2014), 2 <sup>nd</sup> Best Hostel in Latin America (2015,2016,2017);
<b>Santa Mix</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> best ranked hostel in Rio (2014)

Source: Hostelworld.com (2017)

Except from Santa Mix the other four hostels appear in hostelworld list in some category. It is worth to highlight among other categories, the Portuguese hostels stands out in that list for being mentioned as best hostels in the world and Europe, while Discovery in Brazil is mentioned as one of the best hostels in Latin America. Santa Mix, even tough it won no prize until now, it was the second more well-rate in Rio de Janeiro at the date of 2014.

## 5.2 Insights into the hostels

In this section it is narrated the observation and perceptions about the hostels' services and the interactions with the guests and staff experienced by the researcher.

### 5.2.1 Yes! Lisbon

Yes! Lisbon Hostel was the first hostel visited. It is in an historic building, but differently from the others, this one is totally reformulated and modern inside. On its online media (figure 37), the hostel is mentioned with many awards they won as best hostel in the world and also the variety of services they offer.

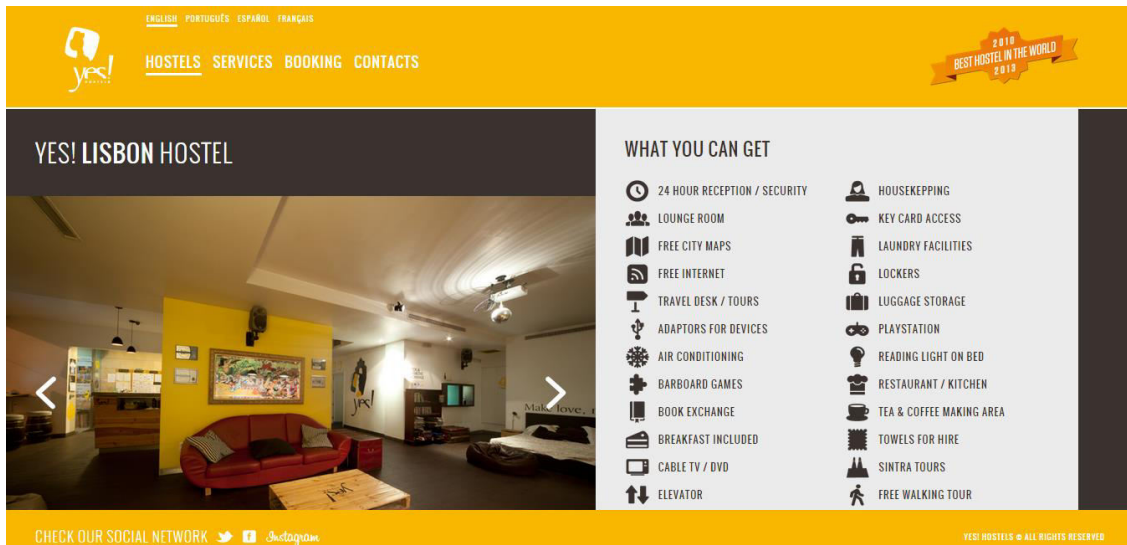


Figure 37 Yes! Lisbon Homepage  
Source: Yeshostels.com (2014)

In their website they describe themselves as following:

"...**Yes! Lisbon Hostel** is thought of not only as a place to stay overnight, but also to give our travellers a different experience of staying and contacting with our city. We're delighted to accompany you around town, with our Sintra Tour, and our Walking Tour to show you the best we have to offer day and night, in a relaxed environment, and never as a guided tour! (Yes! hostels, 2014)."

The behaviour of staff is crucial on this hostel. To give an example, when one arrives at the hostel the receptionist introduces herself with a 'short talk'. She kindly asks where the guest is coming from, the reasons why is visiting Lisbon and takes advantage of that opportunity to offer the guest the services one may need. The receptionist shows to be friendly without being invasive. She also promptly tried to give some hints of what to do "out of" the regular tourist circuit. She explained how the hostel works (they have some wristband key) and offered some services such as: towels, walking tour, beach tour and the dinner.

"The atmosphere is friendly and staff really nice." German, male.

The hostel dinner was tested as an opportunity to interact with other guests. The dinner is served always of typical Portuguese food for a reasonable price (10 euros per entrance, meal and dessert, and free drink till ten at night). During the dinner (right in the end)



they use to offer the pub crawl<sup>8</sup>. Beyond that, the bar, the music (mostly loud) showed to be propitious for an interaction – partying environment.

It was observed that the hostel invests a lot in common areas and social activities (figure 38). The common areas were crucial to create a good environment of interactions between guests. Right in the entrance, the lobby is large and is where the reception, the bar and the common living room are. During the day, guests use the living room to be connected /working on computers, chatting or even to be entertained as there is a TV space with video games and other board games. That same space is where breakfast is served during the morning and during the night is where dinner is served and the bar is opened. All those utilities turn it in the main social space of this hostel.

“I came alone, and the hotel offer many tours, I’ll do the walking tour and the beach tour tomorrow.” Australian, male.

The breakfast showed to be one of the crucial interactional moments. During that time, it is possible to meet some other guests and share travel plans and information. It seemed that it is during the morning that travellers are still open to change the plans, discover some interesting spots and maybe join some groups with same interests. It was interesting to observe how easy it is to socialize at hostels. It seems that on every space or occasion guests feel comfortable to talk to each other and engage in some activities even with people that they have just met.

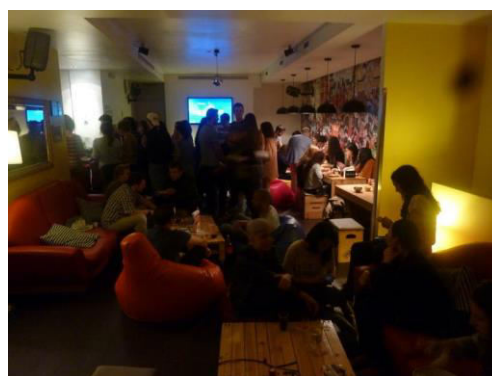


Figure 38 Yes! Lisbon dorms and living room  
Source: yeshostels.com (2014)

Concerning the facilities, as published in the website, the hostel modern structure is noticeable, especially on its functional design. Additionally to that, another point that stands out is the always clean environment. There is one bathroom (with 2 cabins) in each hall. And considering that each hall has two rooms (with about six beds each), that results in one bathroom for a maximum 6 persons.

<sup>8</sup> A pub crawl (sometimes called a bar tour, bar crawl or bar-hopping) is the act of one or more people drinking in multiple pubs or bars in a single night, normally travelling by foot. This practice is very common in hostels and generally offered by them. (Wikipedia, 2014)

"The bathrooms are really clean and large, different from any other hostel. I feel like I have a bathroom only for me." Argentinian, female.

Beyond that, it is notorious the care with functional architecture and design. The rooms are large with one big locker per person. Different from other hostels, those lockers are drawers under bunk beds, which make the belongings more accessible, leaving more free space inside the rooms.

### 5.2.2 Travellers House

The hostel calls itself as "experts providing the best Lisbon experience" (figure 39) and mark a strong identity based on a cosy and antique décor. The hostel is in an antique building in the centre of Lisbon and preserves the old characteristics in its architecture and decoration.



Figure 39 Travellers House Homepage  
Source: travellershouse.com (2014)

Once the guest walks into the building what first comes to attention is the care with the decoration and the atmosphere that clings to that old but chic style (figure 40). Those characteristics reflect in a calm and intimate environment, which is enhanced by some vintage furnishing, and architecture projected to create small and comfortable spaces. The must for the composition of the whole environment is the old jukebox Victrola that invites the guests to choose their preferred songs and surrounds the atmosphere with some lounge music.

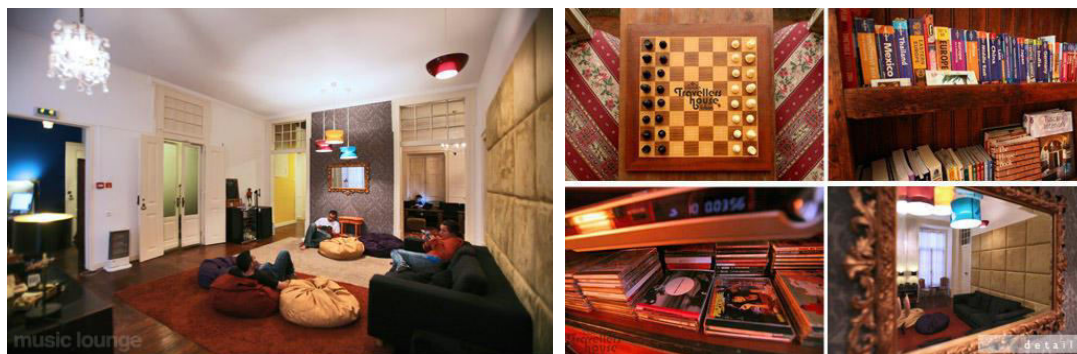


Figure 40 Travellers House living room and furnishing  
Source: travellershouse.com (2014)

The owner of the hostel also works there and talks to guests usually giving some tips of out of the beaten track things to do. In this hostel the receptionist welcomes the guests and does the check in along with a mini-tour, explaining where breakfast is offered and showing the facilities, the bathrooms, the dorms and explaining the rules. A point to highlight is the kindness of the staff and how they are oriented to personalize treatment calling the guests by the name. This was kind of recurring in all the hostels.

In this hostel, the guests were apparently older. It seemed that the hostel was more frequented by young adults and couples who enjoy a more intimate environment. In accordance, the hostel avoids the hostel-party mood. From the hostels visited in Lisbon, this was the only one that did not have a bar. But on the other hand, they offer some extra activities as the wine tasting night, where guests can taste 8 types of wine for 6 euros.

"I'm travelling for a month in a Eurotrip and I choose this hostel because it seemed to have a welcoming atmosphere, and here I liked more because it is not an always partying mood."  
Australian, male.

"I came by the indication of a couple friend of mine that came last year, and I'm planning to come again next year with other friends." Irish, female with a female friend

One of the most commented aspects of the hostels and its strong suit is the homemade breakfast included. The hostel offers to guest three menu options (pancakes, eggs and bacon and yogurt, fruit and cereals) while that the cook readily prepares the food. Apparently, these aspects generate on guests the feeling of being homely cared. Beyond that this concept of slow food engages customers to enjoy the meal, turning it into a moment of interaction.

"The breakfast is amazing, and the location is perfect because we can visit many beaches around, and we have a week for it." German couple.

### 5.2.3 Home Lisbon

Home Lisbon is one of the oldest hostels in Lisbon and belongs to the same owners of Yes Lisbon Hostel. Here the main characteristic is the close relationship with the guest, and the 'homely' theme. In this hostel every detail reminds of home, not only in the way the hostel looks but also because how it is promoted "Home Lisbon Hostel experience...a place that really feels like home!" (figure 41) (Home Lisbon, 2014)

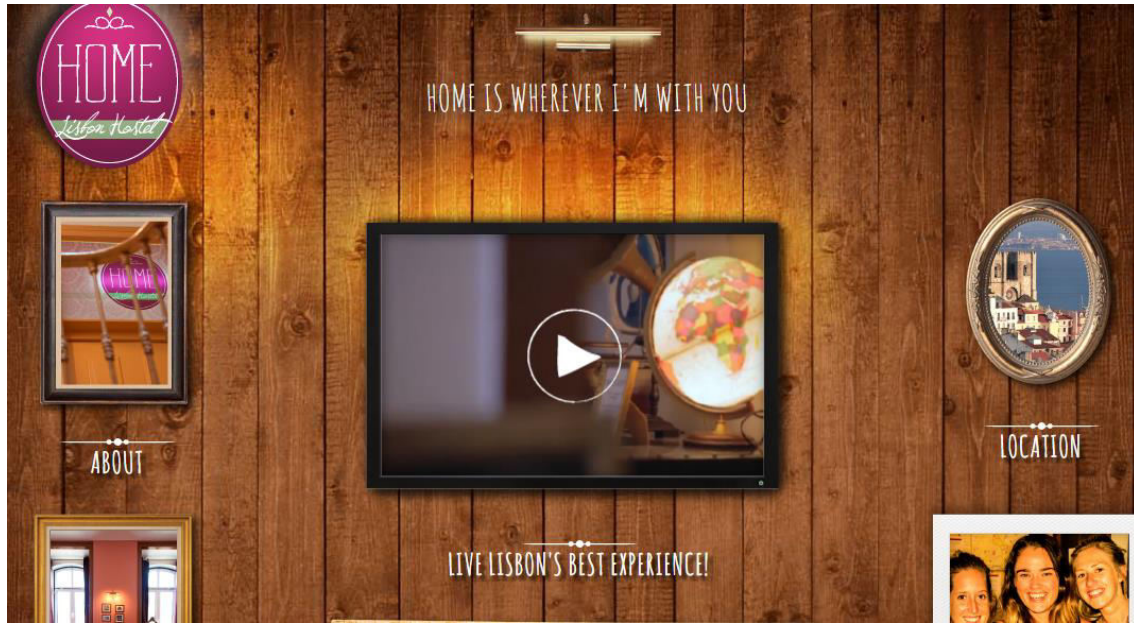


Figure 41 Home Lisbon Homepage  
Source: homelisbnhostel.com (2014)

In this hostel the staff were very attentive and interactive. They welcome guests with a traditional Portuguese cherry liquor (Ginja), a way to introduce guests to Portuguese gastronomy and culture.

In terms of facilities (figure 42) it is very similar to the Travellers House. It is also in an historic building and carries many vintage elements. But what stands out in here is the recurring reference to the family home atmosphere. The decoration of the hostel consists in real pictures of the owner's family, and other elements suggest references to traditional Portuguese homes.



Figure 42 Home Lisbon hall and dorm  
Source: homelisbn.com (2014)



The hostel has an intimate but social atmosphere which is enhanced by the staff and the activities they offer. The staff are always checking if you need any information or support and the hostel offers a sort of activities as tours and events.

"I've never stayed in a hostel so good, the staff is really attentive and here I feel really like home." Brazilian, male.

"I have Portuguese family and I'm here to enjoy Lisbon, here I can practice my Portuguese and feel like home." Canadian, male

The "feel like home" atmosphere is enhanced by the presence of the mother of the owner who cooks dinner for guests (figure 43). The core experience of this hostel is the 'mamma's dinner'. This dinner is like the brand of the hostels, gathering many adepts night after night. The activity costed 10 euros including entrance, meal, desserts, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. The interesting part of "Mamma's dinner" is to see how curious and interactive the guests are with "Mamma", taking pictures with her, asking about recipes and helping her to cook.



Figure 43 Mamma and her cuisine  
Source: homelisbon.com (2014)

According to 'mamma' the idea came from her son (owner of the hostel). When she retired, she wanted to dedicate herself to her cooking passion. So he suggested that she could try cooking for the guests. At the beginning she used to cook only once a week in the hostel, but with the huge number of adepts, they started to offer the dinner almost every day.

She highlighted the importance she gives to offering only local and fresh ingredients, what is appreciated by the guests. Nowadays mamma's dinner is so famous that it is replicated by other hostels; however Home Lisbon was the pioneer. It is interesting to

observe how to include local details, as for instance, elements of Portuguese gastronomy, works well to catch the traveller's attention.

"We want to take a picture with mamma, she prepares such delicious food." Group of girls, 2 Germans and 1 Italian.

This hostel, besides being one of the most traditional in Lisbon and well-rated by customers, it is attentive to some trends. They are constantly including new elements on its services. For instance, as Lisbon is getting known as an important centre for the start-ups scenes, the city is fast becoming the relocation hub of choice for flexible young professionals (Independent, 2017). Home Lisbon, in turn, recently created a new room for co-working<sup>9</sup>. The space is open to the general public with some costs, and free of charge for guests. There, users have Wi-Fi, a meeting room, printers and lockers. The space was created to captivate the digital nomads<sup>10</sup> and for those who work while traveling and need propitious spaces to do so (Home Lisbon, 2017). This gives an example of how some hostels are adaptable to new realities and cities' demand, going beyond the budget accommodation status.

#### *5.2.4 Discovery Rio*

This hostel was awarded several times in the Hostelworld online platform as best hostel in Latin America and in Brazil with respective prizes: Best Hostel in Latin America (2014), Second Best Hostel in Latin America (2015, 2016 and 2017), Best Hostel in Brazil (2014, 2017).

The hostel describes itself as a place "developed by world travellers, Discovery Hostel in Rio de Janeiro provides backpackers and budget-minded globetrotters all the comfort of a boutique hostel and the cosiness and warmth of a home-stay", as explained in their website (figure 44).

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<sup>9</sup> Coworking is a style of work that involves a shared working environment, often an office, and independent activity. Unlike in a typical office environment, those coworking are usually not employed by the same organization. Typically it is attractive to work-at-home professionals, independent contractors, or people who travel frequently who end up working in relative isolation (Wikipedia, 2017)

<sup>10</sup> Digital nomads are a type of people who use telecommunications technologies to earn a living and, more generally, conduct their life in a nomadic manner. Such workers often work remotely from foreign countries, coffee shops, public libraries, co-working spaces, and recreational vehicles. The foundation of the digital nomad movement is remote work, allowing people to do their work at home or otherwise through the Internet (Wikipedia, 2017b)

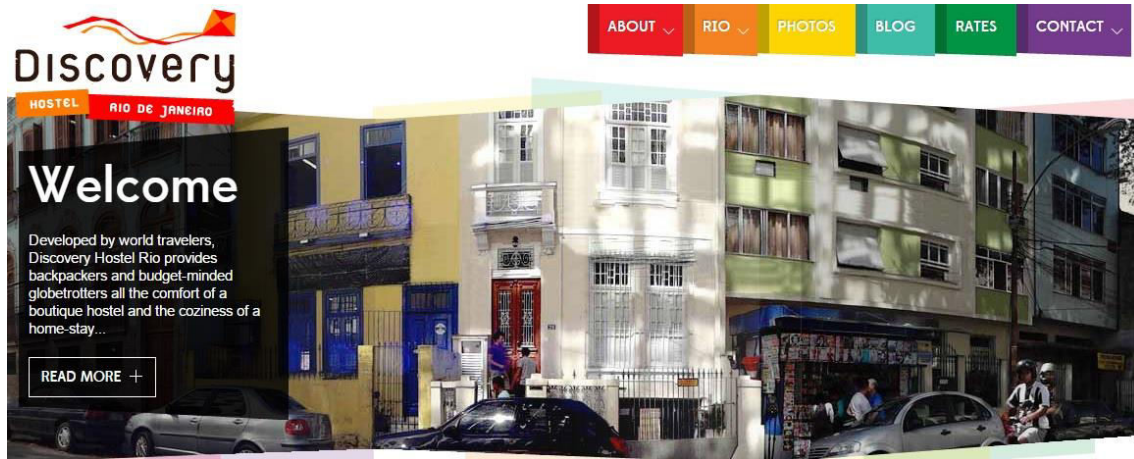


Figure 44 Discovery Rio Homepage  
Source: discoveryhostel.com (2015)

The first impression in this hostel is of a very cosy and carefully decorated space. It is in a nineteenth century building which belonged to the baroness of Rio Negro, Eufrásia Teixeira Leite, a Brazilian investor and financially praiseworthy of XIX century. So, the building keeps the antique lines but with modern interior decoration (figure 45). Living room and terrace are the points where guests meet to chat and to interact. The kitchen can be used by guests till dinner time and afterwards and the same space gives place to a bar with a terrace in where parties and events happen.

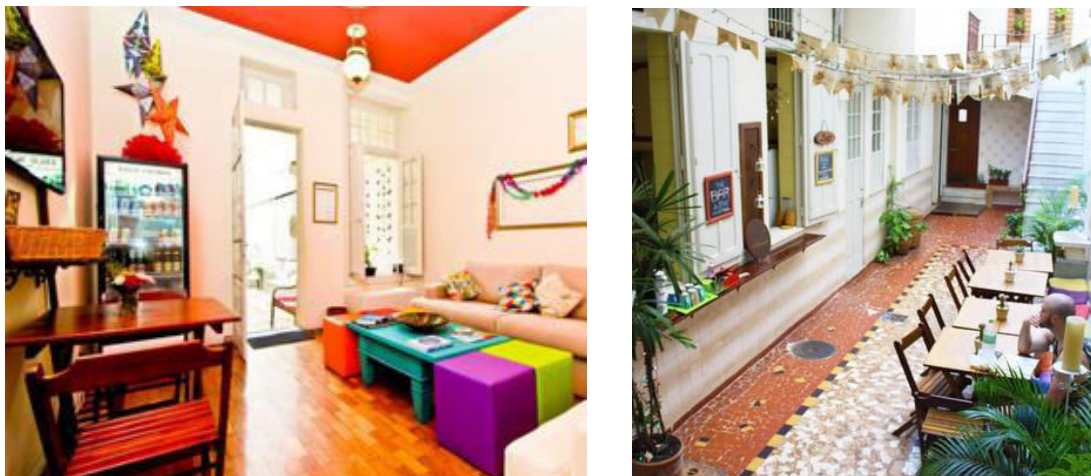


Figure 45 Discovery Rio living room and terrace  
Source: discoveryhostel.com (2015)

Once one enters the hostel, the receptionist shows the facilities and gives a map, explaining some important tips such as, hostel location, the distance to main tourist attractions and the places where to go and where not to go, considering Rio's violence problem.

"You can ask everything to the staff, they will explain how to take transportation, and where is dangerous or not to walk, yesterday the guy of reception went with us to Copacabana (beach), it was his day off and he was spending with us." English, male.

The owners work at the hostel. One is Iranian and another Chilean who after a trip to Rio, 'fell in love' with the city, to use their words and decided to invest in a hostel. They run the business from inside and are always present in the facilities.

The hostel offers a female dorm, private couple room, and mixed dorms with 9 beds (figure 46). Differently from the other hostels visited, in this one, the bunk bed was not double but triple. Apparently, this was a negative point to the guests. As one had practically to climb two fellows bed if one is on the top, and for the ones below it shook the bed, which deemed a little bit uncomfortable. In spite of that, the rooms were clean and had plugs and lights beside each bed.



Figure 46 Discovery Rio mixed dorms  
Source: Source: discoveryhostel.com (2014)

The hostel also offered a book of experiences, which no other analysed hostel had. It consisted of a book divided in two parts: the events and tours. First, it was divided like an agenda by week days, suggesting to the guests what are the best places and parties to go out in Rio. Then, some other activities are shown to fulfil the free time, for instance, activities as: favela tours, beach tours and other longer trips were suggested.

What seemed to be a simple element was very effective. The book generated information to the traveller, brought them closer to the local culture and promoted some sort of interaction among guests. For instance, it was common to see that while the guests read the book wondering what sort activity they will choose, some other people joined in the search. Travellers who did try some activities shared tips of those who didn't, or guests simply engaged in new experiences with others through the hostel's agenda suggestions.

"I'm here for one week already. Yesterday I did the favela tour and I think it was interesting, today I'm going to Pedra do Sal which is a samba in the street for free, as I play percussion I'm excited to see it. Maybe tomorrow I will also do the tour to Buzios (beach)." French, female

The hostel had a party atmosphere and it was common to see travellers meeting in the common areas, sharing their experiences and arranging the meeting point to next parties and tours. However, this environment of party was balanced with calm and relaxation. In the end of the day travellers met in the living room to chat and discuss nightlife program, but after 10 pm silence was respected and required by the staff.



Most of this hostel guests were young people, travelling by their own. Most of them were from other parts of Latin America or from Europe (mainly English, French and German). It seemed that even more there is a diversification in the public which choose hostels, not only in this one but also in other hostels. Older people, families, couples, are also choosing hostels as tourist accommodation. In Discovery Rio, for instance, there was a whole family that were meeting in Rio after one of the girls spent a season as an exchange student in Peru. A family staying in a hostel can be considered an untypical scenario but it is a proof that hostels are widening their target.

"We consider that this hostel has a welcoming and fun atmosphere, we can enjoy some interaction with other fellow travellers in common area and also can have privacy in our room."

German Family, 1 mother and 2 daughters

### *5.2.5 Santa Mix*

Santa Mix Hostel was considered one of the best hostels in Rio. It is rated by hostelworld platform as 'superb' with 91% positive approval. The hostel is in Santa Teresa neighbourhood, a place known by its historical architecture and cultural and bohemian nightlife. A lot of musicians and artists in general live in that neighbourhood, and the hostel follows this atmosphere developing a theme based on the music and bohemian lifestyle.

The hostel is in a traditional old building with three floors. And as Santa Teresa is a neighbourhood with an inclined ground, the hostel is not easily accessible for people with limited mobility and it is difficult to reach because is on the top of a hill. Different from the others, this hostel is located in a residential zone, what gives to it a more authentic atmosphere as it is off most touristic spots.

For instance, it was common to see neighbour's interaction. They were doing Sunday barbecues, listening to samba<sup>11</sup> in a very relaxed mood, while in the opposite side of the street tourists stayed at the hostel. The surrounding of Rio de Janeiro landscape associated to those local lifestyle scene, immersed the guests in a real urban culture of the city without the touristic "make up". From all the hostels visited, this one was the closest to what seemed to be live Rio.

The guests and the staff, especially the foreigners, seemed to like this 'local' way of living. In that hostel there was an English traveller who planned to stay 15 days in Rio, but he liked so much the city and the hostel that he changed his mind.

"I was supposed to stay here for just two weeks as I had my sister wedding back in England. But I love so much those weeks in Rio that I came back after the wedding. I'm still planning if I'll travel to other Latin American countries or stay in Rio for some months. Maybe I'll stick

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<sup>11</sup> Typical Brazilian music.

around some more time because I feel that this hostel is my second home and here I have a few friends." English, male

A similar story happened with the staff. Two of the receptionists were Italian who came first to Santa Mix as tourists and took the advantage to work in the hostel and live for some time in Rio de Janeiro. One was working in the hostel for one year. As he is a pizzaiolo he sometimes offers a pizza night for the guests, taking advantage of the wood oven available in the hostel. The other receptionist was in the hostel for one month and saw in this job, a possibility to afford and extend his Latin America trip.

"I first came to Rio as tourist just after I joined the hostel as staff. I love Rio and the possibility to live local life and to meet people from everywhere."

Staff, Italian, male.

"I arrived in Rio four weeks ago. Now I'm working in the hostel and learning Portuguese. The first time I saw the landscape of Rio from the hostel terrace I adapt my plans to pass some more weeks in here"

Staff, Italian, male.

Concerning the physical structure, the hostel has two dorms with 6 beds each. The rooms are spacious with a bathroom inside. And there are two more common bathrooms, one in the hall and another in the terrace. Kitchen is open and shares the space with the living room, in where the breakfast is served. During the day the living room is a space to chill: to watch movies and series on free Netflix<sup>12</sup> or play videogames. As there are only two rooms, most of guests know each other and interact at some point. Mostly during the night, the kitchen is used by the guests to prepare their own food and especially at dinner time most of the guests used to reunite or in the living or in the terrace to socialize:

"I bought the ingredients at the market and the staff taught me how to prepare some caipirinha. Me and my friends are going to make a barbecue upstairs in the terrace. Don't you want to join?" Couple, English.

The social atmosphere is enhanced by the common areas and the staff facilitate the interactions among guests. For being the smallest hostel of all, the interactions among staff and guests seem to be closer, thereby the hostel gains a cosy environment.

Still, in terms of facilities there are two elements that stands out in this hostel: the studio and the terrace (figure 47). The hostel is also a studio, providing a fully equipped and sound proof music space. In the studio guests can find different kinds of instruments, microphones and synthesizers. The hostel also has a terrace with a privileged view of Rio's landscape. The terrace is a place where guests and staff can interact while barbecues and parties happen.

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<sup>12</sup> Internet streaming media service which offers a great number of movies, TV series and shows.



Figure 47 Santa Mix studio and terrace  
Source: santamixhostel.com (2014)

### 5.3 Highlights of the hostels

The hostels analysed in this study have in common that they are well-rated properties in customer's opinion and they are recognized worldwide for their excellence in services. However, the observation *in loco* unveiled some singularities that helped for them to be considered 'the best' hostels:

Table 22 Hostels' highlights

<b>Hostel</b>	<b>Main target</b>	<b>Environment</b>	<b>Highlights</b>
Yes! Lisbon	Young travellers solo or in group	Modern and party	Functional design (lockers, bed, bathroom); cleanliness; bar/lounge
Travellers House	Young adults and couples	Calm and intimate	Breakfast, welcome tour, lounge music, themed decoration; wine tasting.
Home Lisbon	Young- experienced travellers solo or in group	Homely and interactive	Welcome drink; mamma's dinner; free laundry; co-working space
Discovery Rio	Young experienced travellers	Party and active	Modern decoration; informative introduction; tours and activities book
Santa Mix	Young experienced travellers	Chilled and local	Local involvement; terrace; musical studio; internet streaming TV.

Essentially, all the hostels analysed align their services with the needs of their customers. In other words, they seem to design their service in accordance with a specific target or at least with their core services. Even tough, hostel's customers are usually

young/Millennials, it seems to provide different nuances for this universe. For instance, some hostels which have an environment more focused on the party mood with bar and events, usually attract younger guests, travelling alone or in group, while other hostels with a more calm and intimate environment, eventually attract more mature travellers and couples. This strategy aligns with the customer-to customer compatibility of Martin & Pranter (1989), which suggest that businesses must first attract homogeneous consumers to the service environment then manage the environment and the encounter to enhance customer's experience.

Through ethnographic observation it was noticed that different types of travellers are attracted by different styles of hostels. In Portugal, for instance, Yes! And Home showed some singularities. The first with its modern environment seemed to attract younger travellers that look for a party environment. While the second with its homely environment, seemed to have a more diversified public with travellers from 20 to 40s.

The biggest difference was noticed on the Travellers House Hostel, which seemed to avoid the 'always party' atmosphere, common on hostels, consequently attracting more mature travellers and couples. On the other hand, in Brazil, travellers are young but seemed to be more experienced travellers, usually in long-term journeys. This was observed in Rio, while in Lisbon, it was more common to meet short-break travellers.

In general, the hostels analysed seemed to act 'outside of the box' disrupting with the common sense that hostels are dirty and messy accommodations that offer no privacy. On the contrary, those hostels demonstrate to have enough zeal with cleaning, besides cherishing comfort and quality in its facilities. In terms of facilities, those hostels are well-decorated, with functional design and projected to offer a sort of services that support the guest while travelling, such as: laundry, kitchen and even a co-working space. Also, some small details as curtain and plugs in the beds, and lockers under the beds, enhance the perception of privacy and safety.

Then, some initiatives show special attention to customers. The welcome drink served in Home Lisbon, the welcome tour done in Travellers House and the informative introduction provided in Discovery Rio, are some of the examples. Additionally, some activities such as dinners, events and tours offered by hostels, help to enhance guest to guest and guest to staff interactions.

Beyond that, all the hostels analysed seemed to have their highlights, the aspects that differentiate them from the others. From a personalized breakfast to a simple terrace, hostels may vary in their approach but converge in outstanding some differential. Also, some of the highlights are sometimes associated with a theme. For instance, in the case of Home Lisbon, the decoration and the 'mamas dinner' contribute to reinforce the homely atmosphere.

The difference is that hostels have always been known as a low-profile accommodation that offers its guests nothing more than the basics and in consonance literature has so

far reiterated this discourse without foreseeing any kind of change. As in the example of (Lovelock & Wright, 2002, p.29):

"The core product of the lodging industry is a bed for the night, whether that bed is located in a youth hostel dorm or in a luxury room at a five-star hotel. Youth hostels don't offer many additional services beyond reservations, basic meals, and simple washing facilities. By contrast, a luxury hotel will offer many additional services to enhance its guests' visits. Some of these services will be offered free and others will carry a charge, but they are all secondary to the core service of overnight sleeping accommodation that defines the lodging industry." (Lovelock & Wright, 2002, p.29)

However, contemporary hostels are different from those which in fact for a long time proposed to offer just a cheap bed in dormitories. It seems that the hostels' market saw the need to reinvent itself mainly due to new dynamics of contemporary tourism, the pressures of a changing demand and an increasingly competitive market. The examples presented in this thesis reiterate how some hostels more than a 'cheap bed in dormitories' offer nowadays an affordable bed in a social environment along with a sort of additional services (figure 48).

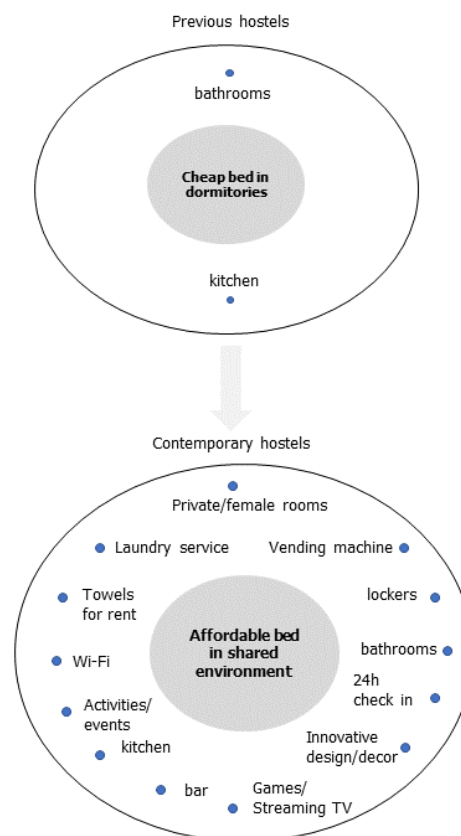


Figure 48 Changing nature of core and supplementary services in contemporary hostels  
Source: based on Lovelock & Wright (2002)

To sum up, what those hostels do differently is showing that being a budget accommodation does not limit their quality; instead they go beyond catching market opportunities, streamlining accommodation sector and aligning with customers' needs. Additionally, those examples sustain how not only it is possible, but is already underway the changing nature of hostels. In this vein, they seem to be leading the way of how to be a tourist accommodation highly appreciated by the customers.

### *Summary Chapter 5*

- There were 5 hostels analysed, 3 in Lisbon, Portugal and 2 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. All the hostels are situated in central location, mainly surrounded by main tourist attractions, transportation and facilities of the city;
- The hostels analysed vary in terms of size and price. The hostels are on average classified as medium hostels, as the biggest hostel has 109 beds and the smallest 21 beds. In terms of price, Brazilian hostels have a lower average price of 13€, compared to Portuguese hostels at 23€.
- The hostels offer a set of services, such as: city maps, wi-fi, 24 hours reception, included breakfast, linen, luggage storage and additional services as laundry, airport transfers, tours, currency exchange and bike for hire. Some hostels offer different types of entertainment to guests, as board games, video games, TV and DVDs.
- In terms of facilities, all the hostels have kitchen and food and drink facilities as well as vending machines. They all also have common areas, such as lounge or terrace and 3 of the five hostels have a bar inside. Those areas are appreciated by the guests as a place to socialize. Most of the hotels are located in antique historical buildings and are not adapted in terms of accessibility. None of them have private parking and only one has an elevator.
- All the hostels analysed are well-rated in customer's opinion, on the Hostelworld.com platform. The scores above 9 in the global evaluation, which are based on 7 criteria: value for money, security, location, staff, atmosphere, cleanliness and facilities. Also, 4 of the five hostels are on the list of the best hostels in categories such as: best hostel in Latin America, best hostel in Europe or best medium hostel of the world;
- All the hostels analysed are considered by the customer as superior to average, but even though they are good, they are singular in terms of target, environment and what they do to pursue to be on the top-rated list.
- Yes! Lisbon has a modern and party environment and attracts younger travellers who are solo or in group. The hostel stands out by its functional design; its cleanliness and a bar lounge which is very appreciated by the customers as a space to eat and to get together with other fellow travellers;
- Travellers House has a calm and intimate environment and attracts older travellers and couples. The hostel highlights by its welcome tours, themed decoration, lounge music and events such as wine tasting. Beyond that the hostel offers a tailored-made breakfast that is very appreciated by the guests;
- Home Lisbon has a homely and interactive environment and attracted a varied sort of young travellers, solo or in group. The hostel stands out by its welcome drink, free laundry and co-working space. But its 'must' it is the mamma's dinner,

that being the owner's mother who cooks traditional Portuguese food to the guests. The result is a feeling of being home outside home, on customer's world, and the most popular hostel of Portugal;

- Discovery Rio has a party and active environment and attracts young experienced travellers. The hostel highlights by its modern decoration, informative support but outstanding for the tours and activities agenda that suggests the best spots in Rio to the guests.
- Santa Mix has a chilled local environment and attracts young experienced travellers. In this hostel, guests have many options of entertainment as an internet streaming TV and a musical studio. Beyond that, as the hostel is in a very traditional neighbourhood it offers a close approach between guests and the local culture. Additionally, its terrace provides a very unique view of Rio's landscape and it is appreciated by the guests;
- In sum, what those hostels do different is that they reinforce in each element that they are not like the others. And that to be a budget accommodation does not limit their quality.





## CHAPTER 6 Data analysis and Findings: What do travellers think about hostels?

In this chapter, it is shown the results of phase IV of the research describing the findings from part one of survey (ii) applied to travellers. First, the traveller's preferences are described regarding attributes of a tourist accommodation. Then, it is described in what measure travellers choose hostels as type of accommodation. This chapter also approaches a description of who are the travellers that usually stay in hostels (hostellers), in terms of demographic and psychographic profiles. Additionally, it is explored differences of between those staying or not in hostels, in terms of: intentions, expenses and preferences in accommodation. Finally, the determinants of choosing to stay in a hostel are here discussed.

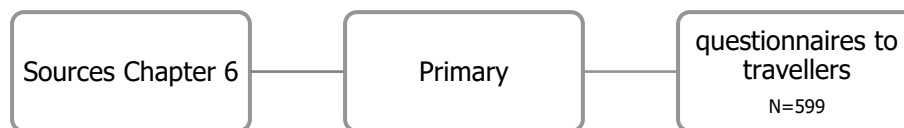


Figure 49 Sources chapter 6

### 6.1 Sample size

The questionnaire applied to travellers had as final sample (table 23) of 599 respondents. Demographic and travel behaviour information are summarized in table 22. Study results show that 72.5% female and 27.5% male. Most respondents were of a age range from 25 to 30 years old (36.2%) and (90.2%) had an university degree, from which 38.4% had at least a bachelor/degree, most of them have arts and humanitie as background areas (60.1%).

Most of respondents were from Brazil (45.6%) and Portugal (38.9%), while 15.5% were from other 35 diversified countries (for instance, Germany – 1.3%, Romania 1.2%, India 1% and Finland 1%). Regarding their travel behaviour, approximatively 68% have stayed in a hostel at least once in their life but 42.5% can be considered hostellers as they affirm keep staying in hostels when they travel.

Table 23 Demographic information and travel behaviour of respondents

Variables	Total	
Gender	Frequency	%
Female	434	72,5
Male	165	27,5
Age		
Less than 18	3	0,5
18-24	121	20,2
25-30	217	36,2
31-40	165	27,5
+41	93	15,5
Level of education		
Elementary School	2	0,3
High School	57	9,5
Bachelor/Degree	230	38,4
Master	218	36,4
PhD/ Post Doc	92	15,4
Background Area		
Arts and Humanities	355	60,1
Sciences	190	32,1
Engineerings	44	7,4
Provenience		
Brazil	273	45,6
Portugal	233	38,9
Other countries	93	15,5
Have you ever stayed in a hostel?		
Yes	406	67,8
No	193	32,2
Do you usually stay in hostels?		
Yes	255	42,57
No	344	57,43
Total	599	100

## 6.2 What do travellers want from a tourist accommodation?

Through bipolar semantics questions, travellers were inquired on how they value different attributes when choosing any type of tourist accommodation. Respondents were invited to answer due to their preferences, according to a set of seven pairs of dual attributes. A 1 to 5 points scale was considered for the questionnaire, in which 3 is considered the zero/neutral point, or as a low trend, while approaching to the extremities, descriptors could be considered stronger trends (table 24).

Table 24 Mean Scores of Traveller's accommodation preferences

Descriptors	b.Mean	St. Deviation	Kurtosis	Standard Error	Neutral point distance
Private/Shared	2,05	1,199	-0,339	0,199	0,95
Calm/Fun	2,78	1,252	-0,896	0,199	0,22
Without/With Activities	2,77	1,266	-0,969	0,199	0,23
Homely/Modern	3	1,205	-0,645	0,199	0
Formal/Informal	3,6	1,154	-0,433	0,199	0,60
Cheap/Expensive	2,44	1,033	-0,503	0,199	0,56
Low-High Technology	3,31	1,048	-0,256	0,199	0,31

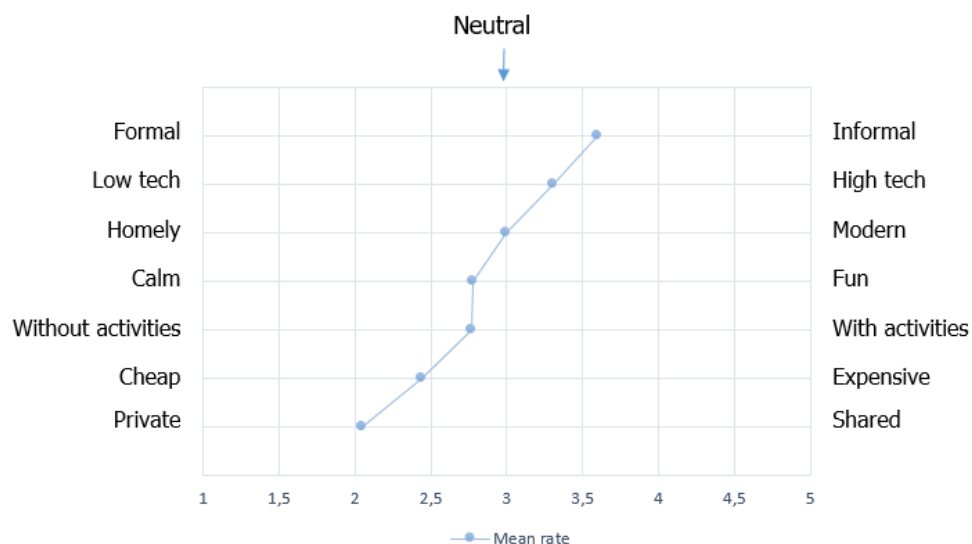


Figure 50 Traveller's preferences on tourist accommodation (N=599)

Results suggest that **privacy** is the aspect that travellers value the most, followed by **informal** atmosphere and **cheap** prices (figure 50). Additionally, travellers are slightly inclined to calm spaces, without activities, and with high technology approach, even though they seem not to be crucial features as they are close to the neutral point. Finally, to be modern or homely seems to be indifferent to travellers.

Summarizing, results suggest that **travellers preferences concerning tourist accommodation reflects on a triad of - privacy, cheap prices and informality**. But, despite the analysis of the general sample leading to important insights, there are a sort of variables that could be related to the preferences on accommodation, such as:

attitudes, behavior and demographic profile, which will be following discussed in this chapter.

If considering hostels, their core features act at least in two aspects of the triad (private-cheap-informal) and are adapting to the need of privacy. **Hostels are** by definition a **budget tourist accommodation** that offer **an informal treatment and atmosphere**, and even though they are known by their shared facilities, there are plenty of examples on how hostels are making efforts to increase guest's privacy. It can be mentioned the **increasing number of private rooms** on hostels, and other sort of small adaptations, such as: en-suite dorms, female dorms, curtains in bed and bathrooms shared with fewer number of guests. Those examples confirm how the contemporary hostel market is oriented to traveller's preferences and trends.

### 6.3 Do travellers consider staying in hostels?

The rapid changes in contemporary tourism are empowering travellers with a sort of options regarding tourist accommodation. But especially, hostels and other accommodation resultant from shared economy are pointed out as the future of Millennials and next generations tourist lodging, but to what extent hostels are really considered as an alternative of tourist accommodation face to other options?

According to our sample (N=599), results suggest that **hostels are on the top three in traveller's mind in terms of tourist accommodation**. Most of respondents rank hostels as their second choice as usual tourist accommodation (figure 51 a) and as third choice when they think about their next holiday's accommodation (figure 51b). Hostels appears just after hotels in the first case, and after hotels and friends/family house in the second case.

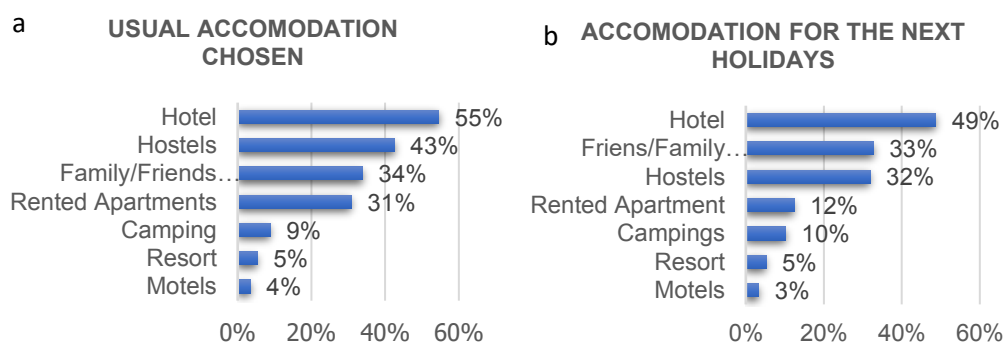


Figure 51 (a) Usual type of accommodation chosen; (b) Accommodation chosen for the next holidays.

Specifically, regarding the preference for hostels, most of respondents (68%) affirms they have stayed in a hostel at least once in their life (figure 52a), while 43% keep electing hostels as usual tourist accommodation (figure 52b). From those who never stayed in hostels, more than half (55%) of them affirm that they would like to stay if given the opportunity (figure 52c).

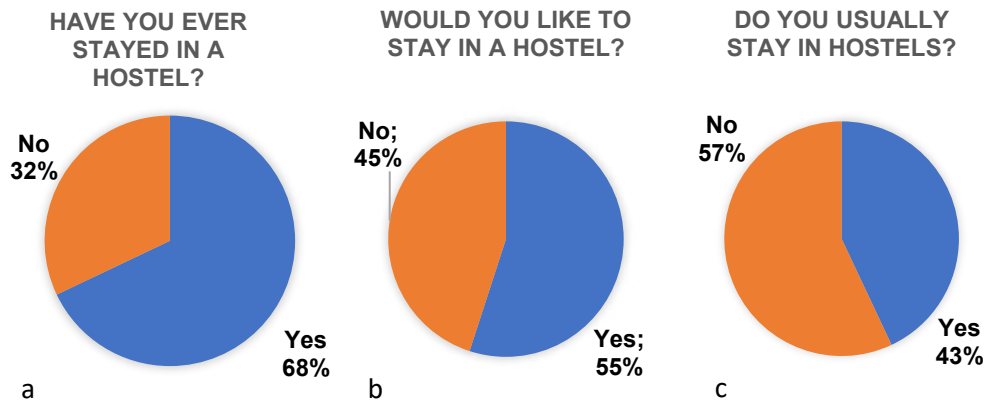


Figure 52 (a) Traveller's preferences on tourist accommodation (N=599)

Source: own construction; Intention to stay in hostels of those who stayed; (c) Travellers usually staying in hostels

According to Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2008) there are three main types of demand: the effective demand are the actual travellers, those who effectively uses the service; the suppressed demand refers to those who do not travel for some reason but are a potential demand for they will travel in some future, if they experience a change in their circumstances or in supply conditions; and the no demand are those who simply do not wish to travel or to experience some service/product.

For this research was considered that: the effective demand is related with those who usually use hostels as accommodation; the no demand is those who don't have any intention to stay in hostels; while the suppressed demand is composed by those that don't stay in hostels anymore (25%) more those who would like to stay on them but for some reason didn't done it yet (11%). Thus, results suggest that hostels have an expressive effective demand of 43% of travellers, a suppressed demand of 36%, and a little no demand of 21%.

The results presented allow to affirm that hostels are increasing their relevance in the hospitality sector, once **there is a strong intention of travellers to stay in hostels**. More, there is a **positive prospection to hostels' market growth**, especially because the suppressed demand and no demand may turn into effective demand, suggesting that hostels may gain a larger slice of the market. The point is that with the consolidation and enhancement of hostel's services it is likely that with time hostels could reach more travellers. In fact, there are a set of factors that do not attract a guest to a hostel (they are discussed in point 7.5 of this chapter), however in a positive perspective results suggest that **those who haven't stayed in hostels yet, will soon**.

## 6.4 Who are the hostellers?

**Hosteller could be considered as a traveller who lodges in hostels**, also known as "youth hosteller". In literature, they are traditionally characterized in relation with the backpacker's profile, defining them as young-budget travellers who use to choose hostels "just" for being the lodge they can afford. However, more recently, some authors state

that new travel dynamics are pluralizing backpacker's profiles (Hecht & Martin, 2006; Uriely et al 2002) as well as their motivations and behaviours. In this vein, our survey aimed to profile hostellers whether they consider themselves backpackers or not, considering as only condition if they use to stay in hostels (n=255). In this mode, results show that hostellers are plural in demographics and psychographics terms; however some characteristics could be highlighted.

In **psychographics terms, hostellers are open to social interactions** and to make new friends; they are also **active**, curious and up to live adventures (figure 53). This is affirmed due to our results which show that hostellers describe themselves mainly as: curious, adventurous, friendly, open-minded, happy, active and positive converging with the sociability sense of hostels encounters mentioned in literature (Sorensen, 2003; Radha, 2015, Murphy, 2001).

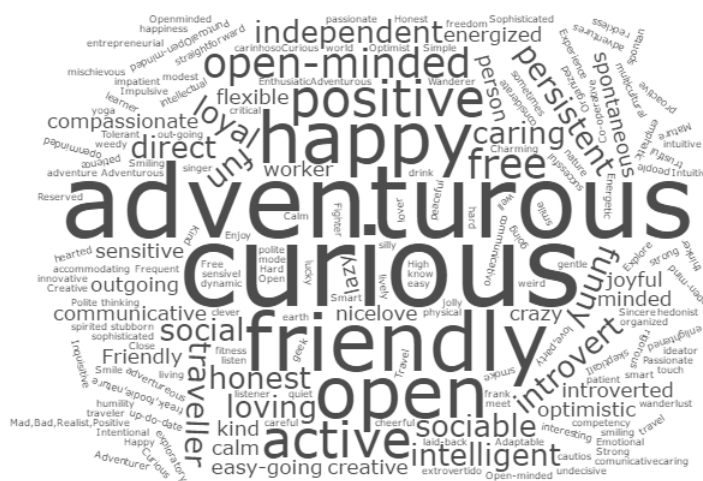


Figure 53 Psychographics description of hostellers  
Source: based on Nvivo 11 results

Concerning their interests (figure 54), data suggest that the five main interests of hostellers regard: travel, as 89% of respondents mentioned, arts - 57%, music - 44%, gastronomy and nature, respectively 42% and 40% of travellers mentioned. Other relevant interests are entertainment (in which TV series and movies are involved), festivals, sports and volunteering, mentioned by 35%, 32%, 22%, 22% of hostellers, respectively. Here it is while to mention that **hostellers** seem to be **more interested in activities that appeal to their sense of creativity, learning, action and social involvement**. Those results align with Maoz's (2007) definition of backpackers which consider that they are interested in recreational activities related with nature, culture and adventure.

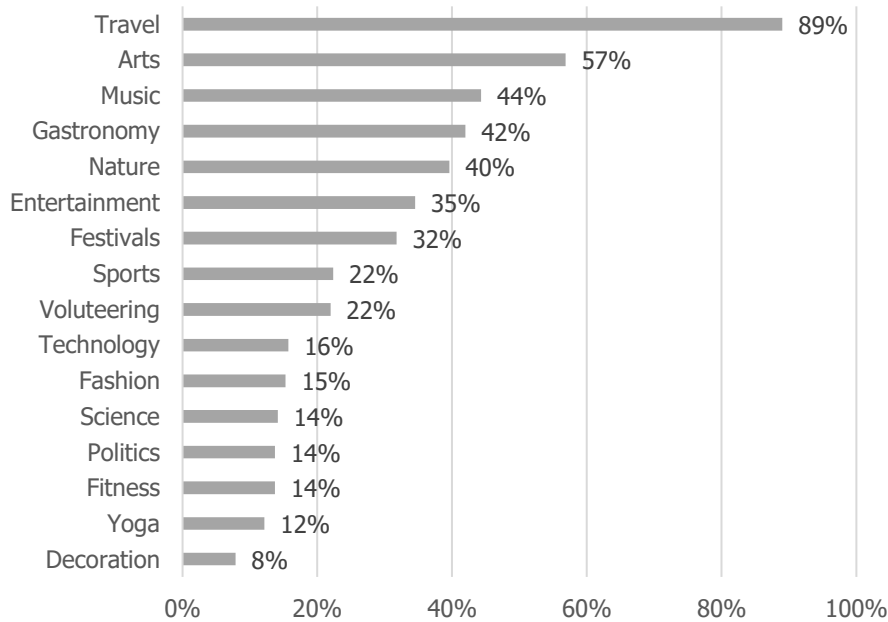


Figure 54 Interests of hostellers

**Hostellers are also loyal to the hostelling movement.** Results show that most of respondents have stayed in a hostel more than once, as most of them (44%) stayed 4 to 10 times, 26% stayed from 1 to 3 times, 16% stayed more than 20 times and 14% from 11 to 20 times (figure 55).

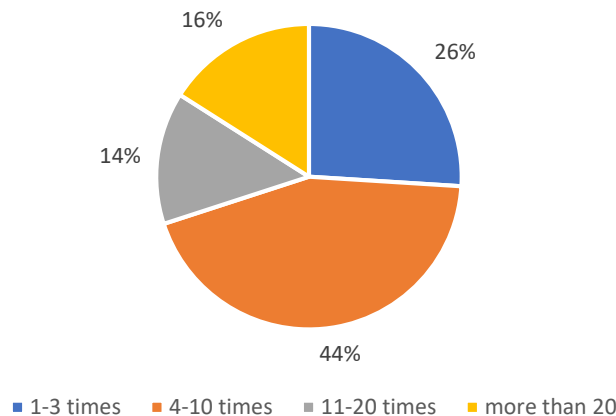


Figure 55 Times that stayed in a hostel

In **demographic** terms, they are:

- **Balanced distributed between male and female:** as 41% of women affirm staying in hostels while 46% of men stay in hostels. Although, there is a slightly higher score in men's preference for hostels, chi square test indicate ( $\chi^2 = 1,134$ ;  $p = 0,287$ ) that there is

no statistically significance between female x male preference for hostels. So, hostels can be considered for boys and girls.

- **Young but not 'teens'**: Results show that the majority of hostellers are between 18-30 years old, however the most representative group is the 25-30, as 58% of them affirm staying in hostels, while 50% of the travellers that are in 18-24 years range usually stay in hostels. In the range of 31-40 and plus 41, 33 % and 15% respectively affirm to be hostellers. These results support the study of Hecht and Martin (2006) that has been an increase in backpacker's age.

- **Well-instructed**: The level of education is a statistically significant determinant for those staying in hostels ( $\chi^2 = 15,154$ ,  $p=0,004$ ). 48% of those who hold a bachelor degree affirm that they stay in hostels and 44% of those who holds a master too. Either 40% of those with high school degree use to stay in hostels, while 25% of those ones holding PhD do too.

## 6.5 Hostellers vs. regular travellers

Hostellers when compared to other travellers, show some differences in terms of travel behaviour and motivations. As the size of the total sample ( $N=599$ ) allow the division in two groups, it was parted in hostellers ( $n=255$ ) and regular travellers (344). T-tests were conducted to confirm if there is any statistical significance in the elements compared.

### 6.5.1 Travel motivations

Concerning the travel motivations (figure 56), could be mentioned as hosteller's main motivations: 1<sup>st</sup> to enjoy the landscapes, 2<sup>nd</sup> to learn new things, 3<sup>rd</sup> to escape from everyday life, 4<sup>th</sup> to see as much as possible from the destination, 5<sup>th</sup> to try local gastronomy and to interact with people. However, once it is compared the motivations of travellers usually staying in hostels (hostellers) and not staying in hostels (regular travellers), T-tests (table 25) indicate that 8 from the 13 travel motivations could be considered statistically significant in terms of different mean rates of the two groups. Thus, it is possible to suggest that **hostelleres are more motivated than regular travellers by learning new things, to escape from everyday life, to see as much as possible from the destination, searching for interactions and making new friends, look for party and nightilfe**. In opposition, regular travellers are more motivated by resting when travelling. If we consider the largest mean differences in absolut terms, it is possible to point out that **the main difference** between the two groups is that **hostelleres are more motivated to make new friends** (mean difference 0,535), **while the motivation of regular travellers is to rest** (M.D - 0,482).



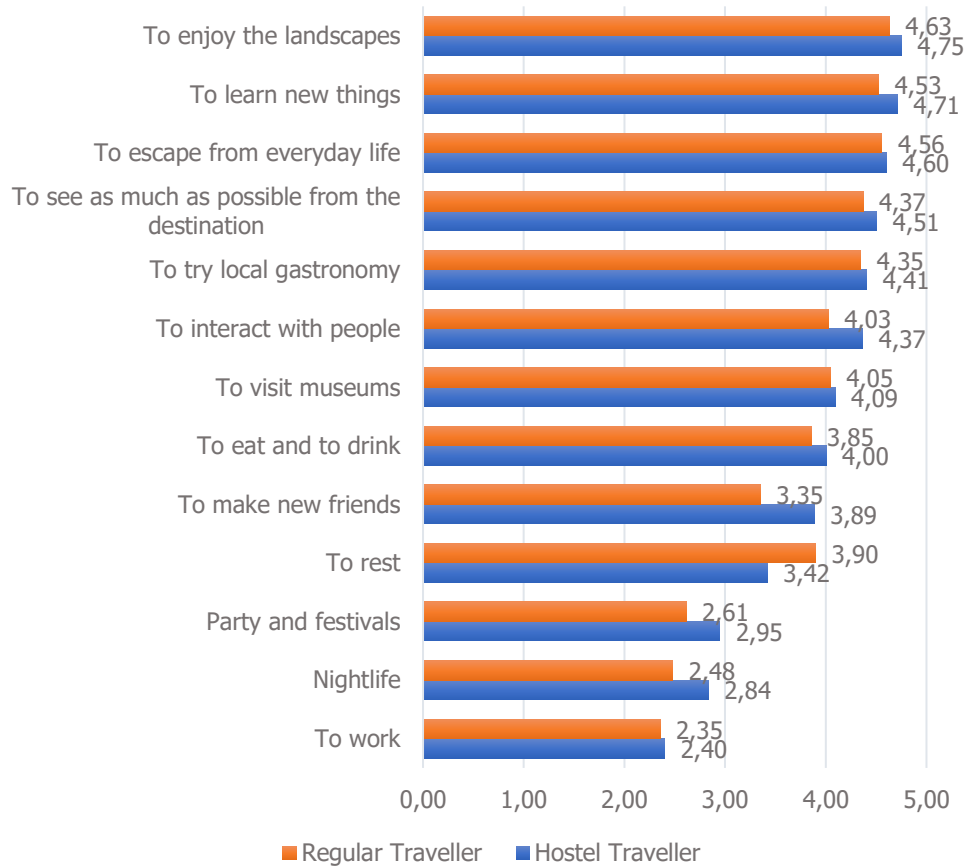


Figure 56 Travellers motivations hostellers vs. Regular traveller

Table 25 T-tests for travel motivations

a.Descriptors	Hostellers n=255		Regular Traveller n=344		d.M.D	e.T-test	f.p
	b.Mean	c.St.D	b.Mean	c.St.D			
To enjoy the landscapes	4,75	0,538	4,63	0,671	,121	2,375	0.018*
To learn new things	4,71	0,629	4,53	0,712	0,184	3.339	0.001*
To escape from everyday life	4,6	0,766	4,56	0,81	0,046	3,409	0,046*
To see as much as possible from the destination	4,51	0,814	4,37	0,834	0,138	-5,232	0,000*
To try local gastronomy	4,41	0,807	4,35	0,84	0,059	0,864	0,388
To interact with people	4,37	0,817	4,03	0,97	0,342	4,565	0,000*
To visit museums	4,09	0,93	4,05	0,931	0,048	0,619	0,536
To eat and to drink	4	0,97	3,85	1,045	0,149	1,782	0,075
To make new friends	3,89	1,083	3,35	1,133	0,535	5,817	0,000*
To rest	3,42	1,157	3,9	1,081	-0,482	-5,232	0,000*
Party and festivals	2,95	1,158	2,61	1,236	0,336	3,377	0,001*
Nightlife	2,84	1,205	2,48	1,175	0,356	3,622	0,000*
To work	2,4	1,135	2,35	1,191	0,045	0,470	0,639

a. Likert scale from 1=Totally disagree to 5=Totally agree.

b. Comparison of mean scores.

c. Standard Deviation

d. Mean Difference

e. Independent sample T-test results.

f. Two-tailed probability with Bonferroni correction

\*p is significant at < 0.05

### 6.5.2 Travel expenses

In terms of travel expenses, hostellers and regular travellers show some similarities as they spend the larger amount of their budget in recreation and leisure, cultural services and food and beverage (figure 57). In terms of statistical significance, t-test results (table 26) indicate hostellers differ mainly in three aspects, as hostellers tend to allocate the smaller amount of their budget to travel agencies, accommodation, transportation and food and beverage than regular travellers.

**The turning point to convert a trip in more or less budget-minded seems to be the accommodation.** Results show that it is in this item that the difference between hostellers and regular travellers' expenses are higher, with a mean difference of 0.57. In previous studies (Hampton, 1998; Scheyvens, 2002) it is suggested that **the money backpackers save by staying in hostels they spread to other points of the tourism chain**, as they purchase more locally produced goods and services than other categories of tourists. Our results do not allow us to confirm this statement, however

even there is no statistical significance found, due to our sample, hostellers seem to spend slightly more in recreation and leisure and cultural services than regular travellers.

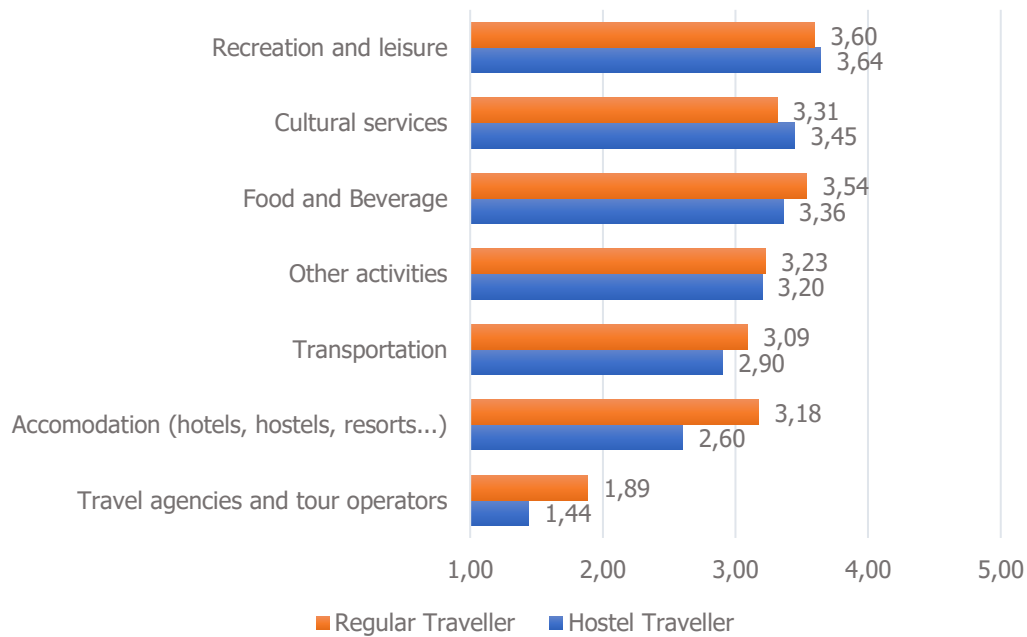


Figure 57 Travel expenses hostellers vs. regular traveller

Table 26 T-tests travel expenses

a.Descriptors	Hostellers n=255		Regular Traveller n=344		d.M.D	e.t-test	f.p
	b.Mean	c.St.D	b.Mean	c.St.D			
Recreation and Leisure	3,64	0,957	3,60	0,967	0,044	0,557	0,578
Cultural Services	3,45	1,059	3,31	1,039	0,133	1,538	0,125
Food and Beverage	3,54	0,849	3,54	0,849	-0,177	-2,506	0,012*
Other activities	3,20	0,894	3,23	0,827	-0,027	-0,378	0,705
Transportation	2,90	0,862	3,09	0,812	-0,188	-2,732	0,007*
Accommodation	2,60	0,835	3,18	0,874	-0,573	-8,090	0,000*
Travel agencies and tour operators	1,44	0,844	1,89	1,053	-0,443	-5,716	0,000*

a. Likert scale from 1=I spend little or nothing to 5=I spend a lot.

b. Comparison of mean scores.

c. Standard Deviation

d. Mean Difference

e. Independent sample T-test results.

f. Two-tailed probability

\*p is significant at < 0.05

### 6.5.3 Accommodation preferences

Concerning the preferences on tourist accommodation both groups show some significant differences (figure 58 and table 27) but the higher difference is on privacy. Even though hostellers and regular travellers tend to prefer private spaces, regular travellers (RTs) tend to require more privacy while hostellers (HOs) are more likeable to share the spaces. Differences were also identified in the atmosphere and price, RTs prefer calm atmosphere and HOs more fun; HOs prefer cheap accommodation while RTs are able to spend more. Then, HOs prefer more informal treatment than RTs, while these are more attentive to high tech accommodation than HOs.

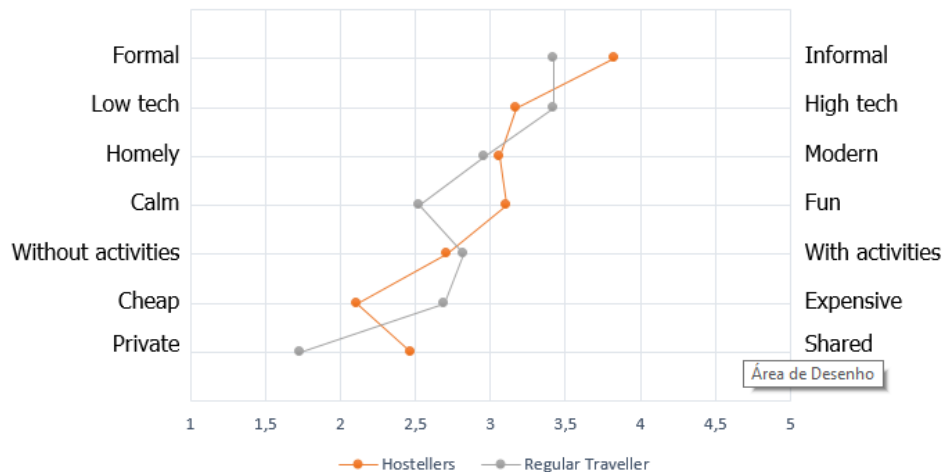


Figure 58 Differences in accommodation preferences- hostellers versus regular travellers

Table 27 T-tests Accommodation preferences

a.Descriptors	Hostellers n=255		Regular Traveller n=344		d.M.D	e.t-test	f.p
	b.Mean	c.St.D	b.Mean	c.St.D			
Private/Shared	2,47	1,196	1,73	1,099	,748	7,828	,000*
Calm/Fun	3,11	1,172	2,53	1,254	,581	5,819	,000*
Without/With Activities	2,71	1,277	2,82	1,257	-,113	-1,079	,281
Homely/Modern	3,06	1,199	2,96	1,209	,103	1,039	,299
Formal/Informal	3,83	1,136	3,42	1,138	,407	4,331	,000*
Cheap/Expensive	2,11	,926	2,69	1,042	-,572	-7,091	,000*
Low-High Technology	3,17	1,016	3,42	1,060	-,246	-2,876	,004*

a. Self-concepted descriptors scale from 1=extreme left adjective to 5=extreme right adjective.

b. Comparison of mean scores.

c. Standard Deviation

d. Mean Difference

e. Independent sample T-test results.

f. Two-tailed probability

\*p is significant at < 0.05

## 6.6 Staying or not staying in a hostel, this is the question: Determinant factors of the hostel-stay

In this section, it is shown the determinant factors of a hostel-stay, exposing the main factors that traveller's point out as crucial to elect or not a hostel as a tourist accommodation option. According to the literature, the main aspects of a hostel stay are their economic and social appeals. Our results confirm those statements, as **travellers elect as the main reasons to stay in hostels, the price** – mentioned by 80% of respondents, **the variety simplicity of services** – 66%; and the social component that includes **the possibility to interact and meet new people** – mentioned by 65% of the respondents.

Other important reasons were mentioned: the multicultural atmosphere - 42%; followed by the design and theme, the young atmosphere, the informal treatment and the environment of fun and party mentioned by 26%, 24%, 19%, 16% of travellers, respectively. The shared facilities were mentioned by just 3% of respondents and could be considered as the weakest reason to stay in hostels (figure 59).

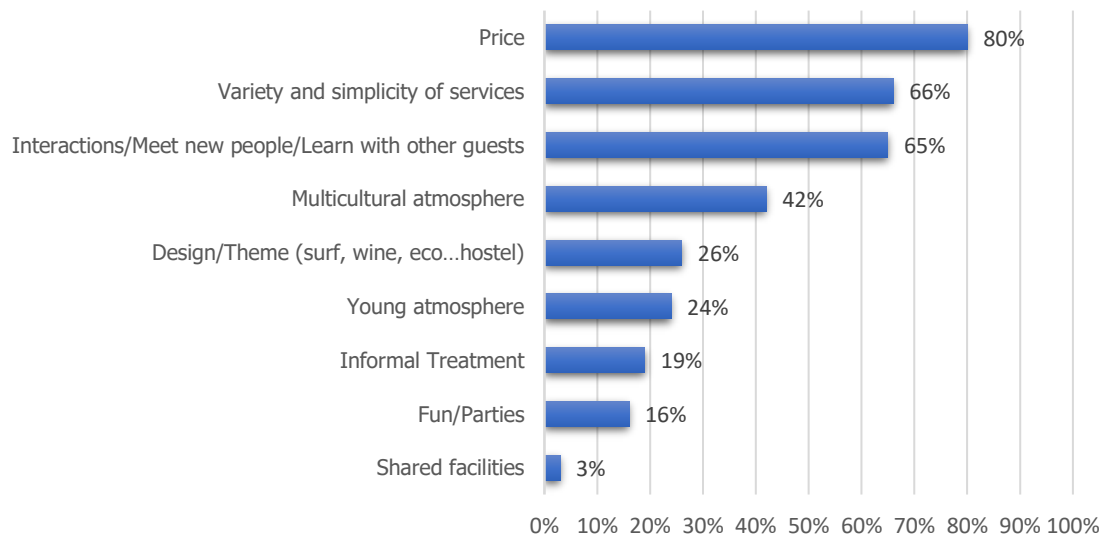


Figure 59 Reasons to stay in a hostel

As they elect the main reasons why to stay in hostels, they also commented some reasons why they don't. In this case, travellers commented that they:

- (a) think **hostels are for young people** and they are not young enough;
- (b) usually **travel with family and kids and hostels don't fit them**;
- (c) don't like to share the spaces and **think that staying in hostels they will not have any privacy**;
- (d) **picture hostels as dirty and messy spaces**.

Some of these statements are based on the low-quality stigma that for long time hostels sustained and the image they create in common sense. Due to the results shown up to now in this study, it was possible to demystify some of them. Moreover, through the results it was possible to identify four **main roles influencing the choice to stay in a hostel**, as following:

### 6.6.1 The location

The location is one important aspect that influences the choice to stay in hostels and most of them are located in urban areas, near the city centres and main offerings. The results confirm this preference, as 86% of travellers prefer to stay in hostels when they travel to urban destinations. Data sustain that hostels are an essentially urban phenomenon, confirming what literature says concerning their strategical location in historic-touristic spaces, which are near most of facilities, transportation and cultural assets (Abrantes, 2014) and moreover add value to their potential to revitalise urban areas by occupying and reshaping historic buildings (Hory et al, 2017). Still, there is an increasing demand for hostels in beach areas, mentioned by 11% of travellers and rural destinations mentioned by 3% (figure 60).

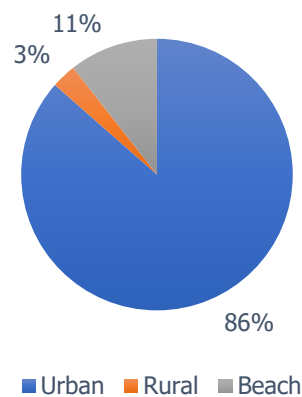


Figure 60 Preferred locations of hostels

### 6.6.2 The company

The main report about millennials travellers suggest that most of hostellers are solo travellers (Hostelworld, 2016a). However, as by our sample, results suggest that most of travellers prefer to stay in hostels when travelling with friends (49%), while 34% of travellers stay in hostels when they are travelling on their own, which corroborate the social character of hostels. But, beyond that, 23% of travellers stay in hostels when travelling as a couple and 9% of them when travelling with family. Even though those results imply, apparently, that those groups aren't the target of hostels, they have a large slice of the market to pursue, especially adapting their services to those travelling with partners and family (figure 61).

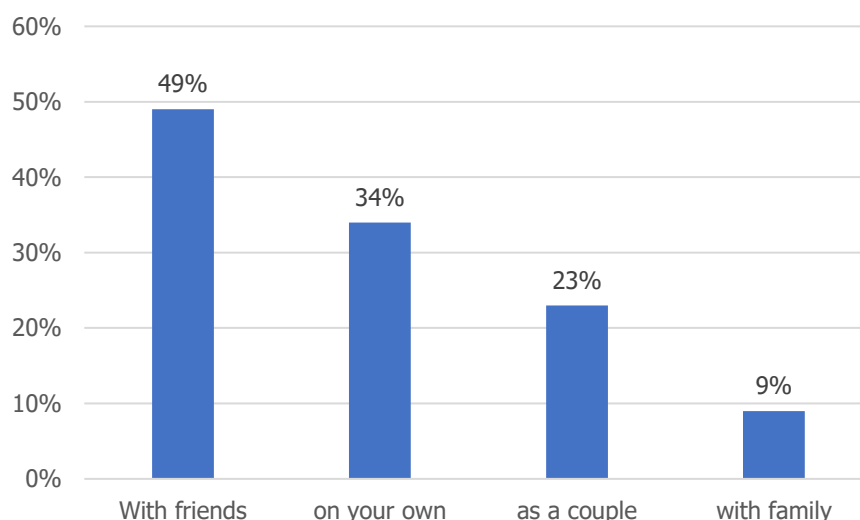


Figure 61 Usual company when stay in hostels

### 6.6.3 The privacy

As discussed in previous sections, the privacy revealed to be one of the most important factors concerning tourist accommodation. As hostels are known by their shared facilities, their services are constantly attached to the image of a lack in privacy. When we go to the results and compare hostellers versus regular travellers, privacy appears as the higher mean distance, confirming that regular travellers tend to require more privacy while hostellers are more likeable to share the spaces. However, privacy is not just an important role for regular travellers, hostellers are also worried about their privacy. Our results (see section 6.6.4 ) are in accordance with the study of Hecht & Martin (2006) that suggests as much as an increase in the age of backpackers also an increase in their desire and willingness to pay for privacy. Contemporary hostels are attentive to that as many offer a set of little functional designed adaptations (e.g. curtains in beds), sometimes going beyond by offering not only dorms but either private rooms and ensuites. This can either increase the range of options to hostellers as well as attract a non-traditional hostel guest(as family and couples), diversifying their target and attending a largest set of contemporary travellers' needs.

### 6.6.4 The age

Hostels were by conception lodging for young people but from the first youth hostellers to contemporary ones a lot has changed. Hostels nowadays are prepared to receive different groups and do not limit age anymore. Still, as explained before, for many travellers the age plays an important role. In fact, **age matters**, and chi square test indicate ( $\chi^2 = 59,191$ ,  $p = 0,000$ ) that age group is a statically relevant factor, whereas the older the traveller is it decreases the probability of staying in hostels, especially after 40 years old. However, an important factor to consider is that differently from similar hostel's studies (e.g Brochado & Rita, 2016), according to our sample the main age rate

is not from 18-24 as expected but from 25-30 with a significant number of hostellers in the 31-40 range, suggesting an increasing demand by more mature people for hostels, in accordance with Hecht and Martin (2006), and reports that affirm that hostels are the tourist lodging of Millennials (Hostelworld, 2016a).

The role of age goes beyond, and it is related with behaviours and preferences which are particular to each age range, for instance, comparing the preferences in terms of tourist accommodation of younger (30 and less) and older travellers (more than 30), some singularities can be mentioned (figure 62).

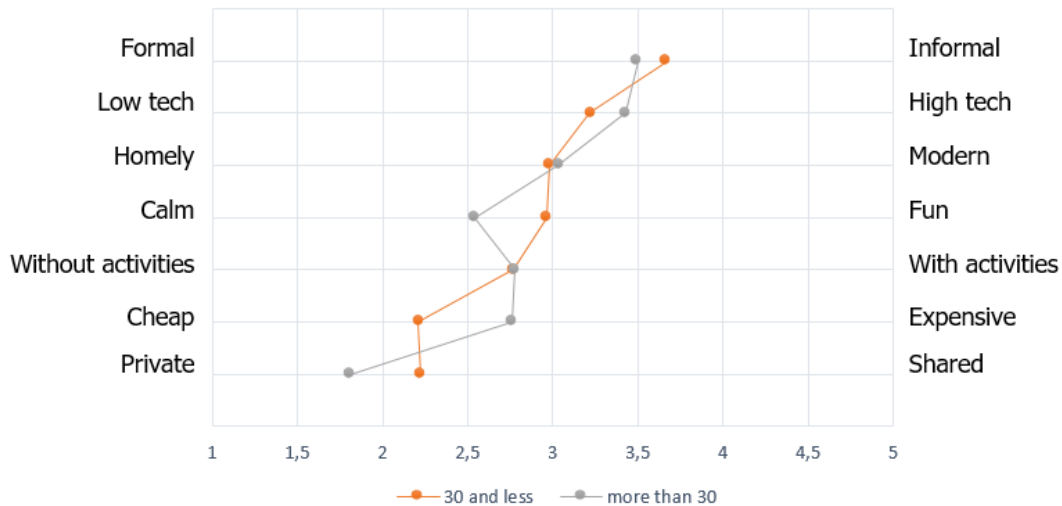


Figure 62 Differences in accommodation preferences - younger versus older travellers

Table 28 t-test Younger vs. Older

a.Descriptors	Younger (30 or less) n=341		Older (More than 30) n=258		d.M.D	e.t-test	f.p
	b.Mean	c.St.D	b.Mean	c.St.D			
Private/Shared	2,22	1,197	1,81	1,163	,413	4,231	,000*
Calm/Fun	2,96	1,232	2,54	1,241	,417	4,086	,000*
Without/With Activities	2,77	1,277	2,78	1,254	-,008	-,075	,940
Homely/Modern	2,98	1,220	3,03	1,186	-,049	-,489	,625
Formal/Informal	3,67	1,169	3,50	1,127	,178	1,887	,061
Cheap/Expensive	2,21	,979	2,76	1,020	-,551	-6,693	,000*
Low-High Technology	3,22	1,067	3,43	1,012	-,211	-2,453	,014*

a. Self-concepted descriptors scale from 1=extreme left adjective to 5=extreme right adjective.

b. Comparison of mean scores.

c. Standard Deviation

d. Mean Difference

e. Independent sample T-test results.

f. Two-tailed probability

\*p is significant at < 0.05



While younger travellers tend to search for cheaper accommodation, older travellers are willing to pay more if more services are offered. Then, younger travellers tend to prefer a fun atmosphere while older travellers more calm spaces, also younger travellers are more likely to share the spaces than older travellers, and in the contrary to what was imagined the older ones are more concerned with the technological resources in the accommodation than the younger ones (table 28).

### *Summary Chapter 6*

- Travellers prefer tourist accommodation that can provide them with a triad of privacy, cheap prices and informality. In consonance, hostels are known for being budget accommodations with an informal atmosphere and even though they are also known for their shared facilities, they are investing in increasing guest's privacy (e.g. curtain in beds, private bedrooms and ensembles) suggesting that they are oriented to traveller's trends.
- Hostels are on the top three in the traveller's mind in terms of tourist accommodation, behind hostels and family and friends house. And despite 43% affirm that they usually stay in hostels, they have an increasing potential for growth.
- Hostellers are not a homogeneous group, but summarizing they can be described as: active, curious, open to social interactions and to make new friends. They are interested in a sort of activities that appeal to their sense of creativity, learning, action, and social involvement, such as: travelling, arts, music, gastronomy and nature. They are also loyal to the hostelling movement as most of them repeat several times the experience of staying in hostels.
- In demographic terms, hostellers are equal balanced between male and female, young but not teens, as most of them are between 25 to 30 years old and are well-instructed.
- Travellers who stay or not in hostels differ in several aspects. For instance, hostellers tend to be more motivated by making new friends while regular travellers prefer to rest. Also, hostellers tend to spend less in travel agencies, accommodation, transportation and food and beverage than regular travellers, but in turn they seem to spend slightly more in recreation and leisure and cultural services than regular travellers.
- Accommodation showed to be the turning point to convert a trip in more or less budget-minded. Concerning accommodation preferences, both hostellers and regular travellers are concerned about the price, however regular travellers are more likeable to spend more with accommodation than hostellers. Beyond that, hostellers are more likeable to share the spaces and prefer more informal treatment and fun atmosphere, while regular travellers are more attentive to the technological appeal in accommodation.
- Results suggest that travellers choose to stay in hostels mainly because of the low-price, the variety and simplicity of services and the possibility to interact with and meet new people. In turn, travellers don't stay in hostels because they

picture that hostels: do not welcome all ages, are not for those who travel with family and kids, don't give the privacy they need, and/or are dirty and messy.

- Although, hostel's market tries to fight the image created by common sense that hostels are not for all. Results suggest that there are some determinant factors influencing the choice of travellers. Four main issues were identified: the location – as travellers prefer to stay in hostels when they are in urban destinations; the company- as travellers prefer to stay in hostels when they are travelling with friends or by their own; the privacy – the main characteristic mentioned by travellers when they choose a tourist accommodation, and finally the age- as results suggest that the older the traveller is the probability to stay in hostels decreases.
- If before hostels were seen just as youth and shared lodging, shaped for group of teens, contemporary hostels fight back with a sort of options to increase privacy of guests and to get to a broader target, additionally, hostels show their value by revitalising urban areas, reshaping historic buildings and also contributing with the 'spill over' effect, multiplying their benefits over beach and rural destinations.

## CHAPTER 7 Data analysis and Findings: Key features of a positive hostel experience

Chapter 7 presents an exploration of the factors contributing to a positive stay at a hostel by electing key items and describing their nature. It does so by integrating the findings from literature review, the Phase II, but the results from Phase III are mainly presents, describing the netnographic content analysis of 431 online comments. The chapter discusses the most mentioned features in hostels, emphasizing their potential to create a favourable environment for social interactions and describes in detail the ten main items and its sub-items which emerged from the research. All the items resultant from the findings presented here were the basis for the findings presented in chapter 8. Finally, the chapter discuss the implications of those experiential features for a better management of a positive hostel experience.

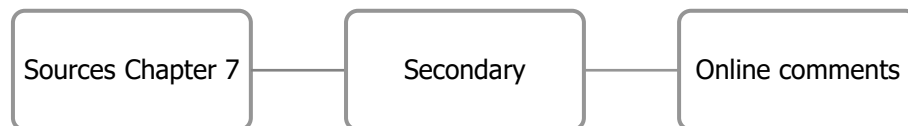


Figure 63 Sources Chapter 7

### 7.1 Sample size

For the netnographic analysis hosteller's online comments posted on the Hostelworld platform were considered. A total of 500 positive comments were analysed, 100 for each hostel (three Portuguese and two Brazilian). However, very short comments which did not describe precisely the positive experience (such as 'great', 'awesome') were excluded, resulting in a final valid sample of 431 comments. From the online platform it was also extracted demographic information such as: age, companion, hostel experience and hostellers country of origin of (table 29).

Table 29 Netnographic sample

	<i>N</i>	<i>POR</i>	<i>H1</i>	<i>H2</i>	<i>H3</i>	<i>BRA</i>	<i>H4</i>	<i>H5</i>
<i>Age</i>								
18-24	137(32%)	103(40%)	41(48%)	23(28%)	39(44%)	34(19%)	16(18%)	18(21%)
25-30	197 (46%)	109(43%)	33(39%)	40(49%)	36(41%)	88(50%)	48(54%)	40(46%)
31-40	82 (19%)	35(14%)	11(13%)	13(16%)	11(13%)	47(27%)	24(27%)	23(26%)
+ 41	15 (3%)	8 (3%)	0(0%)	6(7%)	2(2%)	7(4%)	1(1%)	6(7%)
<i>Companion</i>								
Solo female	189 (44%)	129(51%)	43(51%)	39(48%)	47(53%)	60(34%)	34(38%)	26(30%)
Solo male	167 (39%)	84 (33%)	34(40%)	23(28%)	27(31%)	83(47%)	44(49%)	39(45%)
Couple	40 (9%)	18 (7%)	3(4%)	11(13%)	4(5%)	22(13%)	9(10%)	13(15%)
Group	35 (8%)	24 (9%)	5(6%)	9(11%)	10(10%)	11(6%)	2(2%)	9(10%)
<i>Hostel experience</i>								
Beginner	341 (79%)	211(83%)	74(87%)	69(84%)	68(77%)	130(74%)	67(75%)	63(72%)
Frequent	53 (12%)	30 (12%)	9(11%)	9(11%)	12(14%)	23(13%)	13(15%)	10(11%)
Advanced	37 (9%)	14 (5%)	2(2%)	4(5%)	8(9%)	23(13%)	9(10%)	14(16%)
<i>Origin</i>								
Europe	197 (46%)	92 (36%)	24(28%)	37(45%)	31(35%)	105(60%)	42(47%)	63(72%)
North America	116 (27%)	83 (33%)	31(36%)	22(27%)	30(34%)	33(19%)	24(27%)	9(10%)
Oceania	76 (18%)	58 (23%)	21(25%)	15(18%)	22(25%)	18(10%)	14(16%)	4(5%)
Latin America	30 (7%)	16 (6%)	6(7%)	5(6%)	5(6%)	14(8%)	8(9%)	5(6%)
Asia	11 (2%)	5 (2%)	3(4%)	2(2%)	0(0%)	6(3%)	1(1%)	0(0%)
Africa	1 (0%)	1 (0%)	0(0%)	1(1%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Total	431 (100%)	255(59%)	85(20%)	82(19%)	88(20%)	176(41%)	89(21%)	87(20%)

POR – Portuguese sample; BRA- Brazilian sample; H1...H5 – Hostel 1... Hostel 5.

H1 – Yes!Lisbon; H2- Travellers House; H3- Home Lisbon; H4 – Discovery Hostel; H5- Santa Mix Hostel.

**Age** was distributed in 4 main groups: from 18 to 24, from 25 to 30, from 31 to 40 and plus 41 years old. Most of comments collected were from young tourists from 25 to 30 years old, representing majority of comments 46%, followed by the 18 to 24 years old group, they represent 32 % of the commenters. Oldest commenters between 31 to 40 years old and plus 41 years old represent 19% and 3% respectively. The numbers confirm the profile of hostels customers as being young travellers, however youngest (18 to 24 years old) do not represent majority of sample, what suggest that a more mature profile of customers (generation y) are also representative in hostels market.

When it concerns the age distribution, considering the origin of hostels, age group results are also diversified. In Portuguese hostels, customers are younger than in Brazilian hostels, 18-24 age group represent 40% of customers, while in Brazilian hostels they are 19%. In the opposite side, 31 to 40 years old and plus 41 represent 27% and 4%

respectively in Brazilian hostels, while in Portuguese hostels same groups represent 14% and 3%. In sum, Brazilian Hostel commenters have higher medium age than the Portuguese ones, although most of distribution is concentrated in age group 25-30 for both countries.

**Companion** refers if customers were solo travellers, in a group or as a couple. Most of the commenters were in the hostel as solo travellers, 44% of female gender and 39% of masculine gender. Also 9% of all comments came from couples and a few of hostel's travellers (8%) were in the hostel with a group, here considered as 3 or more people travelling together.

The sample analysed by the country of the hostels shows relevant differences in mode of travel profile. Even though female single travellers represent the majority of commenters, females are less in Brazilian hostels sample – 34% while in Portugal female solo travellers represent 51%. Male solo travellers are 47% of commenters in Brazilian hostels and 33% in Portuguese hostels. Couples represent 7% of respondents in Portuguese hostels and 12% in Brazilian, while groups represent 9% of commenters in Portuguese hostels and 6% in Brazilian.

These results show a sample panorama used in content analysis and do not represent a profile trend in hostels (Brazil and Portugal). However, for this specific sample, they indicate the preference for Brazilian hostels by couples and male solo travellers while in the opposite side female solo travellers and groups are more representative in Portuguese hostels.

**Hostel experience** is measured on the online platform by the number of hostels booked through the website. This way the more reviews hostellers left, the more experienced they are to the community of hostellers. Users with 0-10 comments are categorized as beginners, users with 10-20 comments are frequent travellers and users with more than 20 reviews are considered advanced travellers.

Most of comments are from beginner travellers - 79%, while frequent travellers represent 12% and advanced 9%. In Brazilian and Portuguese hostels beginners represent 74% and 83%, respectively. In turn, frequent travellers represent 13% in Brazil and 12% in Portugal. The biggest difference is in the range of advanced travellers, which represent 5% in Portuguese hostels but 13% of all Brazilian hostels, which may suggest that Brazilian hostels attract more experienced travellers than Portuguese ones.

The **origin** of commenters is from a variety of 43 countries, the majority from Europe and North America, 46% of sample from 27 different European countries, while 27% are from USA and Canada. Also, a significant percentage – 18% is from Australia and New Zealand. Lower distribution is in Latin America, Asia and Africa, 7, 3 and 0 %, respectively. The results from Brazilian and Portuguese hostels are similar. However, some nuances could be identified: Europe issues 60% of commenters in Brazil and 36% in Portugal; Latin America carries a little more weight in Brazil, 8% against 6% in Portugal. In turn, North America and Oceania are more representative to Portuguese hostels, 32 and 23 %, respectively. Most of the comments in the sample of the Brazilian hostels are convenient from American, English and German while the comments in

Portuguese hostels sample are in their majority from Australians, Americans and Canadians.

Table 30 Ranking of nationalities per country

<i><b>Brazilian hostels</b></i>				<i><b>Portuguese hostels</b></i>			
	Country	Frequency	Percent		Country	Frequency	Percent
1	USA	30	17.0	1	Australia	52	20.3
2	England	26	14,8	2	USA	50	19.6
3	Germany	25	14.2	3	Canada	33	13.0
4	Australia	16	9.0	4	England	21	8,2
5	Ireland	12	6,8	5	Germany	17	6.7

## 7.2 Data analysis with Nvivo 11

The amount of data was processed with the support of Nvivo 11 software, and our research was oriented by a sort of steps as suggested by (Kelle 2000 in Flick, 2009):

Step 1: formatting textual data;

Step 2: defining a code scheme;

Step 3: coding data with the predefined code scheme;

Step 4: linking memos to the codes;

Step 5: comparing text segments to which the same codes have been attached;

Step 6: developing subcategories from this comparison;

Step 7: recode the data with subcategories;

Step 8: producing numerical data matrix;

Step 9: analysing this data matrix with SPSS.

To identify the main aspects of hostel experience, content analysis proceeded in three phases. First, a word frequency analysis was run using automatic similarity of words (table 31). In this phase, words were grouped by synonymous, for instance, words such as decorated, decoration and designed were counted in the table as "decorated", the most mentioned word in this group. This process is automatically run by the software, but a more judicious analysis was required to group words going beyond the automatic process. For instance, when mentioning the words Fabio, Gabriel, Enrique and Jorge,

customers referred to hostel's receptionists, who could be tagged as "staff" but as this is not done automatically by the software, the researcher refined the similarities (table 32).

Table 31 Words grouped by similarity

	<b>Word</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>(%)*</b>	<b>Similar Words</b>
1	staff	416	3,45	staff, fabio, gabriel, enrique, jorge, hosts, owner, owners
2	location	391	2,61	fixed, local, localization, locals, located, location, place, placed, places, positive, positives, sites, situated, lisboa, lisbon, portugal, brazil
10	clean	153	1,15	clean, cleaned, cleaning, clear, fairly, flawless, fresh, freshly, light, strip, cleanliness
13	atmosphere	114	0,95	ambiance, atmosphere
14	travellers	105	0,72	going, journey, moved, moving, travel, traveled, traveler, travelers, traveling, travelled, traveller, travellers, travelling, travels, trips
15	breakfast	102	0,85	breakfast, breakfasts
36	facilities	52	0,40	facilities, facility, quick, quickly, ready
47	activities	40	0,26	activities, activity, energized, excited, participate, trigger, trips
50	price	38	0,29	price, priced, prices, loads, money, euros
56	bathrooms	34	0,28	bathroom, bathrooms, toilet, toilets
64	check	29	0,11	agree, check, checked, checking, conditioned, conditioning, ensure, ensuring, learn, marks, stops, train, watch, watching
71	secure	27	0,15	ensure, ensuring, fixed, goods, guaranteed, plugs, safely, safes, secure, secured, security, strongly
79	drinks	25	0,20	booze, drink, drinking, drinks, toast
101	wifi	19	0,10	wifi, wi-fi
120	areas	15	0,12	areas, country
127	kitchen	14	0,12	kitchen
140	designed	12	0,05	advise, advising, concept, decorated, decorations, design, designed, identification, inventive

Notes: \* Weighted Percentage

Source: based on Nvivo automatically word frequency analysis

Within the frequency analysis some words highlighted with significance level of importance to customers, bridging the basis for the final categories or nodes. In this second phase, the final nodes were created, based on the quantitative process, for instance, clean + organized → clean → cleanliness (see table 7), but mainly in the interpretative sense of the research.

Table 32 Nomination of nodes

<i><b>Related mentions</b></i>	<i><b>Main mention</b></i>	<i><b>Final node</b></i>
Staff, people, mamma, receptionist, professional	Staff	STAFF
Offer,	Offer	SERVICES
Night, dinner, walking, activities, tours, meals, visit, events, party, crawl, beach	Activities	Activities
Night, caipirinhas, drinks	Drinks	Bar
Breakfast, meals, fruit, bread	Breakfast	Breakfast
Check, arrived, reception	Check	Check in
Wifi	Wi-fi	Wi-fi
Place, facilities, house, space	Facilities	FACILITIES
Bathrooms, showers	Bathrooms	Bathrooms
Rooms, terrace, areas, rooftop, lounge	Areas	Common Areas
Kitchen	Kitchen	Kitchen
Rooms, lockers, accommodating, curtains, bedrooms	Bedrooms	Bedrooms
Location, Place, neighbourhood, distance	Location	LOCATION
Atmosphere , social, community	Atmosphere	ATMOSPHERE
People, travellers, social, community, guests, hanging, backpacker, fellow	Travellers	GUESTS INTERACTIONS
Clean, organized	Clean	CLEANLINESS
Beautiful, spacious, designed, light	Designed	DESIGN/DECORATION
Price, value, cheap	Price	VALUE FOR MONEY
Secure, lockers	Secure	SAFETY

The whole categorization process and content analysis addressed to final ten categories and nine subcategories which were additionally sustained and named based on literature review. The description of content analysis is presented in the following sections.

### **7.3 What do hostellers mention when narrating a positive hostel experience?**

Going through online comments, it is clear how hostellers link their positive experience to social interactions. The feelings of being accepted as part of the community, making





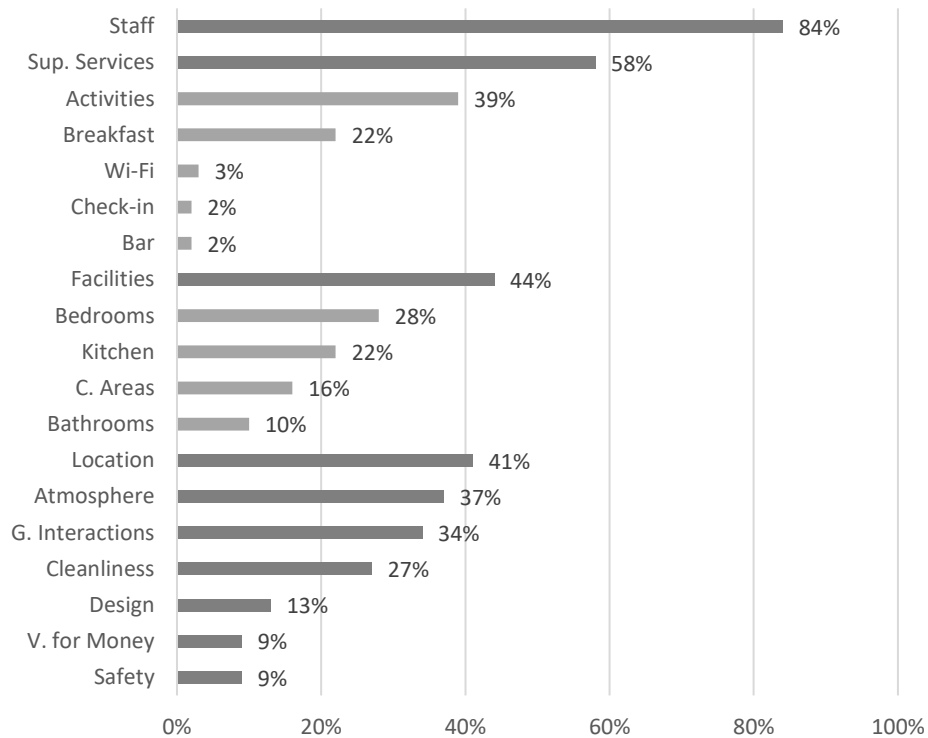


Figure 65 Most mentioned items  
Source: based on Nvivo 11 results

Table 33 Total number of mentions by item

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Brazil</i>	<i>Portugal</i>	<i>Hostel 1</i>	<i>Hostel 2</i>	<i>Hostel 3</i>	<i>Hostel 4</i>	<i>Hostel 5</i>
N Total	431	176	255	85	82	88	87	255
Staff	361	157	209	65	69	75	72	209
Sup. Services	251	81	175	52	54	69	34	175
Activities	166	35	145	49	33	63	11	145
Bar	10	5	5	2	0	3	0	5
Breakfast	96	45	44	8	29	7	21	44
Check-in	8	3	4	1	1	2	2	4
Wi-Fi	15	7	7	3	4	0	6	7
Facilities	188	75	108	36	32	40	44	108
Bedrooms	119	46	72	23	19	30	23	72
Bathrooms	42	15	24	6	5	13	10	24
C. Areas	67	34	24	12	5	7	31	24
Kitchen	15	5	6	1	3	2	5	6
Location	176	83	84	33	31	20	43	84
Atmosphere	161	78	79	30	24	25	40	79
G. Interactions	145	64	87	38	23	26	28	87
Cleanliness	118	49	72	29	19	24	15	72
Design	56	25	26	5	10	11	14	26
V. for Money	40	7	33	18	6	9	4	33
Safety	37	14	20	8	9	3	11	20

Source: based on Nvivo 11 results

Results also allow an additional analysis of the strong points of Brazilian and Portuguese hostels, considering the weight each item represents to Brazilian and Portuguese hostels (table 33). It is possible to draw out, for instance, that Portuguese hostels stand out in terms of activities that enhance social interactions, such as dinners and pub crawls and

in terms of value for money, as the guests of Portuguese hostels mention those items more than the ones of Brazilian hostels. On the other hand, Brazilian hostels' guests use to mention more items, such as: breakfast, common areas (especially terraces) and the atmosphere. Those singularities mostly confirm what is described in chapter 5, but as most of the items in Brazilian and Portuguese samples have similar weight, a global analysis of the features is allowed, as presented in the following items of this chapter.

### 7.3.1 Staff

Employees in every type of service play an important role for being the personification of the company. In lodging service also, they hold the power to influence a big part of quality perception in service encounters (Farrel, Souchon and Durden, 2001). In hostels, the workforce is a key factor for their success (Papis, 2006), and our results confirm the importance of the staff to a positive hostel experience, as it emerged as the most commented item (figure 66).

Staff can also facilitate positive social interactions between guests (Levy, 2010), and in hostels they play this role especially well because they are able to create close relationship with guests, in regard to the social environment that hostels are propitious to have. But what best hostels staff do differently to make such a significant difference in guests' experiences? According to online reviews, in hostels the best staff is not only good but great because they create friendship ties with guests and are as much supportive as they can. Beyond that, they collect a set of characteristics, as being friendly, helpful, welcoming, informative, cool and professional.



Figure 66 Word cloud - node: staff  
Source: Generated from Nvivo 11

When customers refer to the staff they mostly use words such as: great, amazing, super, awesome, good, excellent, wonderful, exceptional, which confirms that staff in those hostels goes beyond than what is expected.

"... staff is amazing from the receptionist to the bartender." Female, 18-24, EUA. Discovery Rio.

Also, the best staff is mostly described as **friendly** (151 mentions) and **helpful** (135 mentions), and according to the guests they should be also kind, careful, lovely and gentle. Guests also valorise when the staff make them feel welcomed, at home and as much comfortable as possible, which makes **welcoming** (53 mentions) the third most important aspect of a great staff.

"...The staff is so lovely. Just like a family and really care about the guests." Female, 18-24, Australia. Discovery Rio.

"The staff was very nice and relaxed! They really have time for you, and they make you feel very welcome." Group, 25-30, Belgium, Beginners Travellers. Home Lisbon.

"The staff was phenomenal, so welcoming and so helpful with all of our questions." Group, 18-4, Australia, Beginner Travellers. Home Lisbon Hostel

Another aspect mentioned by customers is that a great staff should be knowledgeable and **informative**. In the hostels analysed, the staff usually ensure that guests have all the information they need, especially at the check-in. This is an important time for staff to demonstrate how they care about the guests and create some emotional bonds with them.

"...the overview of the city Zion (owner) gave was extremely helpful in planning the rest of the trip." Female, 25-30, EUA, Beginner Traveller. Discovery Rio.

"The owners have thought of everything to ensure this hostel stands out from the rest. When we first arrived the receptionist on duty sat down with us and gave us a detailed run through of everything to do in Rio." Couple, 25-30, Ireland. Discovery Rio.

"I travelled on my own and the staff was so caring. They helped me where they could and also supplied me with loads of tips." Female, 25-30, Germany. Travellers House.

Other aspects mentioned by customers is that they value a **cool** (21 mentions) but **professional** (9 mentions) staff. Both characteristics may seem opposite in the first impression, however when we go through the essence of a hostel service, this means that even being designed to be a relaxed and casual environment, hostels must have an informal but professional service.

"Friendly chilled staff." Group, 25-30, Ireland. Santa Mix Hostel.

"The staff is extremely professional, friendly and knowledgeable" Group, 25-30, Canada. Yes! Lisbon.

"...But the best part is staff, no doubt they are some cool cats!" Male, 18-24, EUA. Yes! Lisbon.

" I arrived late, 2:30am and Gabriel was there to help me out." Male, 25-30, Mexico. Santa Mix Hostel.



Another type of activity commented by guests are the **tours and trips**. Hostels sell them as suggestions of regular-touristic discovering or off the beaten track tours and are usually suggested by the staff. Most of hostels work with associated companies or execute their own tours. Tours and trips are also an important strategy to fulfil guests' agenda and to promote a sort of connection with the destination, appealing to their explorer spirit.

"...They have good tours being offered! Stayed there for 3 weeks instead of 5 planned days... Absolute recommendable this place!" Male, 18-24, Germany. Discovery Rio Hostel.

"...I especially liked the easy of walking tours." Female, 41+, EUA. Home Lisbon Hostel.

**Pub Crawls** are a sort of bar-to-bar tour guided by a local and are another of the activities mentioned. Pub crawls appeal to guests desire to enjoy nightlife and is a crucial opportunity to facilitate socialization among guests. This type of activity has a strong appeal to younger travellers who search for fun and parties.

"the pub crawl was great fun too! Very easy to meet people as a solo traveller." Male, 25-30, Australia. Yes! Lisbon.

"They are very organized with planning trips and pub crawls." Female, 25-30, EUA. Home Lisbon Hostel.

There are also other sort of **events** usually organized inside the hostel which enhance the moments of staff-guest and also guest to guest interactions. Those internal events are a strategy which hostels use to increase the environment of interactions, using an appeal to local culture and endogenous elements. For instance, Brazilian hostels promoting barbecue and caipirinha's (typical drink) night or Portuguese hostels promoting fado (typical song) night and wine tasting.

"...they really care about guests and host different dinner events like churrasco (barbecue)." Female, 25-30, England. Discovery Hostel.

"The staff were amazing and organise an event every night." Couple, 25-30, Australia. Travellers House.

"The array of excursions available (pub crawl/booze cruise/tours etc) made it easy to meet people and Mama's dinners was the best I've ever had! I love this place so much I'm already planning next summer's trip!!" Female, 25-30, USA. Home Lisbon Hostel.

### 7.3.2.2 Breakfast

In low cost lodging breakfast included is not mandatory and in hostels breakfast is usually charged as an extra fee. However, all the hostels analysed offered breakfast included and it shows to be an interesting strategy that hostels may use to involve customer's senses. Results suggest that breakfast is a much appreciated item among guests, as

according to them, the breakfast is an important element to start the day with energy and with a positive mood. In guest's words: they valorise when breakfast "is for free" and "delicious".

"Breakfast is by far the best I've had at any hostel." Group, 25-30, Switzerland. Home Lisbon.

"Free and complete breakfast." Female, 25-30, Canada. Home Lisbon.

"Rising mood breakfast." Group, 41+, Latvia. Santa Mix.

"The included breakfast is incredible" Female, 18-24, Canada. Traveller House.

According to guests all the hostels analysed offer a high-quality breakfast, in customer's words, they value the fact that it includes **fresh** food and **homemade** meals. Due to the comments' analysis offering included breakfast makes a difference, since it creates with guests the sensation of caring and homely bonds. For instance, Brazilian hostels are recommended for their variety of fruits in the menu while some Portuguese hostels prepare the menu in the morning according to customer's requests.

"... the breakfast is good and homemade!" Female, 31-40, Canada. Discovery Rio.

"...the breakfast is amazing, there are freshly baked goods on offer each morning." Female, 31-40, Australia, Beginner Traveller. Discovery Rio.

"The breakfast is delicious, with fresh fruit juice every day." Female, 31-40, Slovenia. Santa Mix.

"...when you get a cooked breakfast every morning you can hardly complain." Female, 5-30, England. Travellers House.

In this context, it is mentioned by hostellers that a **varied** breakfast completes an amazing and unforgettable menu. This variety includes: bread, toast, cheese, ham, muesli, cake, coffee, milk, tea, eggs, jam, juice and fruits. So, if most of low cost accommodation do offer included but basic breakfast and they do it is offered the basics, if hostels consider guests' opinion they must offer a breakfast with a range of options.

"Breakfast every morning was lovely - homemade cake, fruit, bread and French toast." Couple, 25-30, England. Discovery Rio.

"The breakfast is good -- bread, cheese, ham, fruits, coffee, milk, and fresh juice." Couple, 25-30, Netherlands. Santa Mix.

### 7.3.2.3 Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is nowadays an essential stay support item and is also remembered in the hostel environment. Due to guests comments they consider Wi-Fi as a basic need, but most of them consider internet connection as a part of the facilities/services. In sum, according

to guest's comments, they valorise a **fast, free and good quality** Wi-Fi which also **works in the rooms**.

"Wi-Fi service is very good." Couple, 25-30, Netherlands. Santa Mix Rio.

"Wi-Fi available in the rooms." Female, 25-30, Brazil. Discovery Rio.

"Free Wi-Fi." Female, 25-30, Germany. Travellers House.

"Fast Wi-Fi throughout hostel." Male, 41+, England. Travellers House.

#### 7.3.2.4 Bar

Three of the five hostels analysed have a **bar and even** those which do not have the physical space to serve drinks in related events. Apparently having a bar in the hostel is important to guests, as they have one **space to interact with other guests and socialize**. According to comments a bar promotes a **party atmosphere** and an opportunity to **meet new travellers**. Beyond that guests valorise the possibility to have **cheap and tasteful drinks**.

"...the bar offers cheap and delicious caipirinhas." Male, 25-30, EUA. Beginner Traveller. Discovery Rio.

"...the bar outside is a great way to meet other travellers." Male, 25-30, Australia. Beginner Traveller. Discovery Rio.

"...a good place to party as the atmosphere in the bar is awesome." Male, 25-30, Australia. Beginner Traveller. Home Lisbon Hostel.

#### 7.3.2.5 Check-in

Most of hostels have an informal character in their services and usually provide a simple check-in process. Results withstand that check-in should be the most efficient and fast as possible, as well as being crucial as one of the first encounters with service and usually the first personal contact with staff. So, in customer's words, they valorise a good **check-in that is fast and simple** and a hostel with **24 – hour reception** with **flexible service**.

"Check in was simple." Female, 25-30, EUA. Discovery Rio.

"24 hr reception was great." Male, 25-30, Australia. Home Hostel.

"I arrived late 2.30am and Gabriel was there to help me out." Male, 25-30, Mexico. Santa Mix

"Great and fast check-in process." Male, 18-24, Australia. Home Lisbon



### 7.3.3 Facilities

Hostel's facilities are here referred as the physical spaces and include the: bedrooms, common areas (that can be lounge, terrace and balcony), bathrooms and kitchen. Facilities (figure 68) in the hostel are usually related to the feeling and perception of comfort, privacy, cleanliness and aesthetics and more often are linked with some cognitive aspects as quality perception and good value for money.



Figure 68 Word cloud - node: facilities  
Source: Generated from Nvivo 11

#### 7.3.3.1 Bedrooms

The bedrooms are the most mentioned item within facilities (119 mentions), this so important because they are part of the core service of a hostel. Guests associate the bedrooms with **cleanliness**, design and **comfort**, and valorise comfortable beds and **spacious rooms with space to put their luggage**. According to the comments, guests express that they want **privacy and silence inside the bedrooms**, in this mode it can be interpreted that guests like to be social outside the dorms but once they are inside they want to feel relaxed.

"...sheets come in a sealed plastic. The bunk beds are attached to the wall and beds have quite a space between them. Each bed has a small shelf on the side, with a plug and a lamp."

Female, 31-40, Brazil, Beginner. Discovery

"...there is no noise after 11pm so that others can sleep." Male, 25-30, Ireland. Discovery

"Very clean, stylish, comfortable beds, loved the lower bed with a curtain." Female, 31-40, Poland. Home Lisbon

"Amazingly comfy beds (with curtains), drawers to lock your bags under your respective bed."  
Female, 18-24, Canada. Home Lisbon.

### 7.3.3.2 Common areas

If in the bedrooms guests want to find some peace, on the other hand, common areas (lounge, patio, terrace, tv room) are the place for guests to socialize and to know other like-minded travellers. In this mode, common areas must be designed to be functional and to enhance interactions among guests. According to guests they valorise common areas where they can relax, with comfortable furniture, background music, well-designed spaces and possibly with nice views:

"The common areas are comfortable and great for socializing." Male, 25-30, EUA.

"The set-up of the courtyard and the lounge area enable interaction with other guests." Female, 25-30, England.

"... very cool living space with TV, Netflix, sofas, etc." Couple 18-24, Scotland.

"Good music, party and cool atmosphere on the rooftop." Female, 25-30, France.

"There's a wonderful terrace at the top with panoramic view over Rios city centre and a studio with about 20 different guitars." Male, 18-24, Germany.

"...the fresh living room and the soothing jazzy background music in between visits." Group, 18-24, France, Beginner.

### 7.3.3.3 Bathrooms

The bathrooms are remembered and usually associated to cleanliness. As hostels are sometimes stigmatized as messy and dirty places, hostellers seem to be positively surprised when they find good conditions. The hostels analysed stand out for their shared facilities care. Additionally, some details as hooks and towels please the customers:

"Showers are hot and clean." Male, 25-30, Ireland. Discovery Rio

"Bathrooms are always kept clean." Couple, 25-30, EUA. Discovery Rio.

"...the bathrooms are also the best I've experienced in Europe." Male, 25-30, Australia. Home Lisbon

"...wood floor bathroom and appreciated attention to details down to the hook on the towel that you can borrow for 3€." Female, 31-40, EUA, Home Lisbon.

### 7.3.3.4 Kitchen

One of the characteristics of hostels is that most of them provide a kitchen for guests to prepare their own meals, in the case of the hostels studied they offered a communal kitchen. This is an item valorised by guests, especially because it is both a space to share some moments with others and save also some money on food. According to guests' comments the kitchen must be functional, clean and full-equipped:

"Full kitchen facilities and they sell drinks in the kitchen with an honesty pot." Group, 25-30, Ireland, Beginner. Santa Mix

"Very clean kitchen" Female, 31-40, Netherlands, Beginner. Discovery Hostel.

### 7.3.4 Location

A good location is strategical to tourist accommodation prosperity as it strongly influences a tourist's hotel selection decision. According to many authors to be located in areas that offer: accessibility to tourist attractions and transportation, cultural diversity, environmental quality areas, public safety and infrastructure influences the demand side (Arbel & Pizam, 1977, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1990; Wall et al., 1985 in Cró & Martins, 2017). In accordance with literature, hostellers mention location (176 mentions) as an important feature for a positive hostel experience (figure 69).



Figure 69 Word cloud - node: location

Source: Generated from Nvivo 11

Comments reveal that guests appreciate it when the hostel is located **near main tourist attractions and nightlife spots**. They also want to stay in **accessible places**, so it is recommended that when the hostel is not at a walking distance from main places, it must have at least a **good connection with public transport**, such as metro and buses.

"Within walking distance of the main sights." Female, 18-24, England.

"Great location, walking distance to the party area, metro station and the supermarket."  
Female, 31-40, Germany.

"...amazing location close to everything you need." Female, 25-30, Germany.

"Location is very central and safe." Male, +41, England.

### *7.3.5 Atmosphere*

The atmosphere is the pervading tone or mood of a place, situation or creative work (Oxford, 2017). Regarding the tourist accommodation it can be described as the persona of the place, it is its self and soul. Like a person's personality it is possible to describe a hostels' atmosphere as more or less social, more or less calm and etc. Guests also render this judgement and valorise when the atmosphere marks an identity of the hostel and reflect positively on the quality of service encounters.

"Really charismatic place." Group, 25-30, Ireland. Santa Mix

"Had a fantastic stay at Travellers House. Probably the best hostel I've stayed in. Best of all, though, was the atmosphere." Group, 25-30, Norway. Travellers.

"Hostel with a soul, great staff and good place to meet other travellers." Male, 25-30, Brazil.  
Santa Mix.

Defining or managing the atmosphere is a challenge for hostels because it correlates with numerous other items such as staff and guests' interactions, facilities and cleanliness. The atmosphere is probably the most immeasurable aspect of a hostel experience and it is complicate to manage due to its intangibility. For suppliers, the challenge is to develop a good environment that customers perceive as a great atmosphere. However, in many cases, they cannot intervene directly in personal aspects (e.g. customer-to-customer interactions). In those cases what they can do is to prepare the service escape in which interactions will happen. The experiences of the hostels analysed show in fact that hostels can design an appealing environment to specific targets, as for instance, creating an ambiance for parties and fun, usually for younger hostellers or focusing on intimate and private spaces creating a more relaxed environment.



"I felt part of the family from the start. Good community spirit and heading out together." Male, 31-40, Ireland. Santa Mix.

Sociability is a crucial aspect in hostels. In accordance, hostellers mention that they also valorise a **fun and party atmosphere** (50 mentions). In guests' words, a hostel must be happy and vibrant, a place where they can feel cool in party mood and be allowed to have some fun inside. This aspect could be enhanced through activities such as dinners and parties but also through personal contact with staff and other travellers. To have facilities that facilitate interactions is also a must, as hostellers appreciate to spend some time in common areas such as: rooftop, living room and the bar.

"...It has the perfect atmosphere for those just looking to have some fun..." Female, age 18-24, EUA. Yes, Lisbon.

"... Good music, party and cool atmosphere on the rooftop." Female, 25-30, France. Santa Mix.

"There is a great party atmosphere in the hostel, but the staff are careful there is no noise after 11pm so that others can sleep." Male, 25-30, Ireland. Discovery Hostel

In hostels, those travellers do not want to feel themselves as foreigners, and many hostellers see the hostel itself as a home away from home. As such, they sometimes develop a sort of identification with the property. For this a **homely atmosphere** (44 mentions), where customers feel themselves in a familiar environment and among friends, is highly appreciated.

"Felt as if I truly was at home from the moment I entered, until the moment I left." Male, 18-24, Australia. Home Lisbon

"Friendly, welcoming and accommodating staff help to create a real family feel and comfortable atmosphere, just like home." Male, 25-30, Australia. Home Lisbon

"It felt like you were attending a big family dinner. So cozy!" Female, 31-40, Sweden. Home Lisbon

"...Felt more like staying with friends than in a hostel actually." Male, 25-30, Czech Republic. Santa Mix

Despite of hostellers' wish for interactions and a party and fun atmosphere, they sometimes desire some private space to be chilled and relaxed. For this, to develop a **Relaxed Atmosphere** (22 mentions) where customers can avoid noise and disturbance whenever they want to be in a quiet mood, is highly recommended.

"The hostel was very homely - spent one morning chilling in the lounge watching a film recovering from the night before. Very comfortable and relaxed." Couple, 18-24, England. Home Lisbon

"The hostel is quiet and a good place to get a good rest and Chill out. We enjoyed!" Female, 31-40, Netherlands. Santa Mix.

"...awesome and chilled atmosphere." Female, 25-30, Germany. Travellers House

"Perfect hostel ... a good balance between party and some needed quiet time." Female, 25-30, Australia. Yes! Lisbon

Comments also refer to a **comfortable atmosphere** (13 mentions) with cosy and charming spaces where they can feel welcomed, warm and well-accommodated. Those elements can be enhanced especially through the physical structure such as decoration and design.

"This feels like a house, with a welcoming feel and comforting ambiance. Female, 18-24, EUA. Discovery Rio

"Santa Mix is a great hostel with a warm & welcoming atmosphere." Female, 25-30, Netherlands. Santa Mix.

"The best hostel I've ever been. Cosy, lively and organized." Female, 25-30, Brazil. Yes! Lisbon

"...an overall charming atmosphere." Female, 25-30, Germany, Beginner Traveller. Travellers House.

As a final characteristic, a **unique atmosphere** was remembered as being important to a hostel. For this, comments suggest that a hostel that appeals to cultural and local aspects attracts guests as well as an environment that is suitable for all ages and not only the youngest.

"It is suitable for all ages and everybody feels home and welcome." Female, 25-30, Switzerland, Beginner Traveller. Home Lisbon.

"...the whole hostel however has a slightly cult vibe." Female, 18-24, Canada, Frequent. Home Lisbon

"Great mixture of fun vibe and unique cultural experiences." Male, 25-30, EUA, Frequent traveller. Travellers House

### *7.3.6 Other guests*

Hostels are a space for interactions, a type of lodge where guests are practically "forced" to interact with other guests, mainly due to their shared facilities. However, those interactions happen not only because of the physical aspect but mostly because hostellers are up to explore their social side. Online comments' results confirm the relevance of guests' interactions (145 mentions) in the hostel (figure 71), as many hostellers associate their positive stay with this aspect of social experience.



Figure 71 Word cloud - node: guests' interactions  
Source: Generated from Nvivo 11

Part of the social involvement in hostels occurs in customer-to-customer (C2C) encounters. C2C encounters or relationships in service environments are relevant because they hold the potential to shape customer experiences in terms of customer satisfaction, perceptions of service quality, customer retention and the roles existing customers play in recruiting new customers and orienting or assimilating them in service environments (Martin, 2016). Some studies have addressed the influence of customer-to-customer relevance in tourist services (Wu, 2007; Wu 2008), as for instance in festivals (Rihova, 2013), cruises (Papathanassis, 2012) or hotels (e.g. Miao, 2014). But in hostels, there are few studies exploring this aspect (e.g. Radha, 2015), making guests' interaction an issue to be unveiled. Our exploratory results corroborate the literature, bringing to the light some aspects that hostellers describe as positively influencing the hostel experience.

Hosteller's narratives reveal that many of them see in hostels not only a night-sleep lodge but as a place where they can interact. As for our sample, a significant part of them are travelling on their own, hostellers see in other fellows the opportunity to share experiences and make friends, minimizing the feeling of being alone.

Online comments highlight that hostellers want to meet other travellers because with others it is possible to share experiences, give and take tips of destinations, hang out together and to enjoy the city and activities of the hostel. Thus, the socialization with others enhances the social atmosphere and helps to cultivate the feeling of being a part of the hostels' community.

"It's nice for meeting a lot of travellers and to enjoy a little part of the Portuguese culture."  
Couple, 18-24, Canada. Home Lisbon.

"I was a solo traveller and didn't feel lonely for one second! Met so many wonderful people through the nightly dinners and pub crawls." Female, 25-30, EUA. Yes! Lisbon.

"...the layout of the hostel makes it very social great place to stay and make friends." Male, 41+, EUA. Discovery Rio.



"... I met so many new friends there and I think we will keep contact with each other for long."  
Female, 25-30, China. Travellers House.

Comments also reveal that there is an issue of compatibility in terms of personality and other guests' behaviour. In their narratives hostellers suggest that the best hostels attract also the best guests, emphasizing that they want to meet other guests with the same interests to cite their words travellers with the same "vibe" (vibrations). Accordingly, they want to meet other fellows who are in a partying mood, who are fun, outgoing, curious and who are also communicative and from different parts of the world.

"...great hostel to meet other like-minded travellers." Male, 25-30, Ireland. Discovery Rio.

"Extremely helpful staff combined with open-minded people make it a perfect stay in one the most interesting cities in the world!" Male, 25-30, Germany. Santa Mix.

"...meeting new people from all around the world!" Male, 18-24, Austria. Yes Lisbon.

"The hostel attracts the best people you can meet, and you are guaranteed to have a great time if you stay here!" Female, 18-24, Canada. Yes! Lisbon.

"I met so many people and travellers that were curious and outgoing!" Female, 18-24, Trinidad Tobago. Home Lisbon Hostel.

"The hostel attracts fun travellers!" Female, 18-24, Australia. Discovery Rio

The quality of C2C interactions is difficult to be managed; however hostellers in their comments give some tips on elements that help to create a propitious environment for positive experiences. Staff, activities and facilities are some elements that seem to be enhancers for guest-to-guest interactions, as staff can 'break the ice' and facilitate an environment of chatting and interactions; intimate and small spaces with communal places increase the moments of sociability among guests, and activities allow moments of sharing among guests enhancing the feeling of being part of traveller's community.

"The staff at this property are absolutely fantastic and really make the place very social. We meet so many nice people during our stay here." Couple, 25-30, Australia. Discovery Hostel.

"Dinner was also a great experience. I was able to meet new people while enjoying a good meal." Female, 25-30, Canada. Home Lisbon

"...the nightly activities as well were a great way to meet people." Female, 25-30, Australia. Travellers House.

"It's really easy to meet people, especially at the meals." Male, 18-24, Scotland. Home Lisbon.

"Fantastic Hostel, great staff and wonderful social activities." Group, 25-30, Germany. Home Lisbon

"There was always someone to talk to in the common room." Male, 25-30, Norway. Santa Mix.

"...it's a small hostel so you get to know everyone." Couple, 25-30, Ireland, Frequent. Santa Mix.

"... facilities, rooms, staff and most importantly the common room/bar is great to socialise!" Male, 18-24, Australia. Yes! Lisbon.

### 7.3.7 Cleanliness

Several studies have identified cleanliness as one of the most important attributes of hospitality services which impact consumers' decision-making (Walls, 2013; Ambler, 2015). In hostels, for instance, Hecht and Martin (2006) identified that concerning backpackers' preferences, cleanliness is the most important factor followed by location, personal service, security and hostel facilities. However, due to our results, cleanliness (figure 72) emerges as the seventh key factor of a positive customer experience (118 mentions). Still, hostellers use to mention that the best hostels are usually "impeccably clean" or refer to them as "the cleanest hostel they've stayed in".



Figure 72 Word cloud - node: cleanliness  
Source: Generated from Nvivo 11

Hostellers associate cleanliness with hostel's facilities, such as: bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchen and common areas. And valorise when facilities are **continuously cleaned** along the day, even when the hostel is full of people

"Extremely clean with continual cleaning evident across the course of the day". Male, 25-30, Australia, Beginner. Home Lisbon

"Everything is so clean, the kitchen has almost everything you need for cooking - also clean, and the bed is so comfy and very clean as well." Female, 18-24, South Korea. Santa Mix

"The bathrooms were good and were kept clean." Female, 25-30, Saudi Arabia. Yes Lisbon.

"The facilities were kept spotless even with the number of people coming in and out." Female, 31-40, EUA. Home Lisbon

Cleanliness is usually an element related to cognitive responses and the perception of **organization** and quality. However, cleanliness also enhances the feelings of **comfort** in hostellers, and arouses the **aesthetical aspect**. They also associate a clean ambiance to a **homely** atmosphere and believe that clean facilities impose **more respect for the place** and encourage all the guests to maintain a collective standard of cleanliness.



The design and decoration is mainly related to the facilities, as hostellers associate it to a sort of spaces such: as dorms, bathrooms, common areas, etc. They particularly valorise when the spaces in the hostel are comfortable, cosy and homely, with modern design.

"The living room was so cosy." Female, 18-24, Indonesia. Yes! Lisbon

Beyond that hostellers are very attentive to aesthetical aspects, and pay close attention when hostels create a decoration that sticks to the hostel theme, as for instance a family house. Design can also enhance the hostel **social** environment. It seems that even though hostellers like privacy inside the bedrooms, they also like it when common spaces make social interactions easy. Lounge areas, terrace and spaces for barbecue and for table or electronical games are examples of places where hostellers can have fun and make friends.

"It has the hostel owner's family photos on the walls." Female, 18-24, Canada. Home Lisbon

"Amazed by the look of the place: prettiest and neatest hostel ever." Group, 18-24, France.  
Travellers House.

"The place is very well decorated." Couple, 18-24, Scotland. Discovery Hostel

"...the layout of the hostel makes it very social, great place to stay and make friends." Male,  
+41, EUA. Discovery

### *7.3.9 Value for money*

The price is one of the main factors influencing the choice of a tourist accommodation, but on the contrary the price itself does not influence a guest-stay experience, instead the evaluation guests project due to its economic value does. The price is usually related with the perception of quality and involves cognitive value dimensions of a customer experience, therefore the good-value for money positively influences a service experience (Walls, 2013). Our results are in accordance, once hostellers use to associate their monetary investment with the quality of the services they get (figure 74).



hostels offering. Those aspects could be also seen as opportunities for hostels to differentiate their services.

"Drinks are available at the hostel at a good price, which is convenient and helps socialize."

Male, 25-30, France. Santa Mix

"You can borrow a towel for 3euros!" Female, 31-40, EUA. Home Lisbon

### 7.3.10 Safety

The importance of safety in tourist accommodation was mentioned in studies concerning hotels (Knutson et al, 2009) and luxury lodging (Cetin & Dincer, 2013). Concerning hostels our results suggest that safety (37 mentions) is also a key factor for a positive guest experience (figure 75). Hostellers refer that feeling safe is mainly related with two dimensions: inside the facilities and outside the facilities



Figure 75 Word cloud - node: safety

Source: Generated from Nvivo 11

To control guests' belongings security in dorms and shared spaces is not always possible and hostellers know that. For this, when referring the security inside the facilities, guests valorise when hostels offer rooms with lockers for their bags and personal objects.

"The security was great." Couple, 18-24, Australia. Yes Lisbon.

"Plenty of space to store your bags safely." Couple, 25-30, Australia. Travellers House.

"... we could lock our room and the hostel felt secure. We found the area around the hostel to be safe." Female, 25-30. Germany. Santa Mix.

However, when hostellers refer to the feeling of safety, they evaluate also the surrounding areas of the hostel. Amblee's study (2015) correlates the perception of security with the situation of cleanliness inside the hostel, but our results on the other side suggest that safety is strongly related to the location of a hostel. According to hosteller's narratives they valorise hostels which are located in safe neighbourhoods.

"...located in a safe and calm neighbourhood!" Male, 31-40, Denmark, Frequent Traveller.  
Discovery Rio.

### *Summary Chapter 7*

- According to the major results of the analysis on hostellers' online comments, a hostel stay is positively enhanced by ten key features: staff, supplementary services, facilities, location, atmosphere, guest interactions, cleanliness, design and decoration, value for money and safety. Moreover, the staff, supplementary services, and facilities were the most mentioned features in hostels and therefore must be emphasized for their potential to create a favourable environment for social interactions.
- Staff is the most mentioned item and play an important role, because they are responsible for the first personal touchpoints with the service and can facilitate social interactions between guests. In hostellers' perspective, a good staff must be: friendly, helpful, welcoming, informative, cool and professional.
- Supplementary services (here included activities, breakfast, wi-fi, bar and check-in) are in the second place when hostellers narrate their positive experiences. For instance, activities (e.g. tours, dinners) play an important role because they enhance an environment of sociability among guests and offer them a sort of option of entertainment. Beyond that, hostels that offer included breakfast of fresh and homemade food with varied options are valorised.
- In third place, facilities appear also as influencers of a positive hostel experience. Bedrooms, common areas, bathrooms and kitchen, must be clean and comfortable in the hostellers' opinion. Beyond that common areas play an important role for being spaces where guests can socialize.
- The location appears in fourth place as strategical for a positive hostel experience. Guests valorise when hostels are near main tourist attractions and nightlife spots and are central with a good connection with public transportation.
- The atmosphere is the fifth feature and refers to the ambiance (which include physical facilities and human aspects) of the hostel. Friendly, social, party, fun, homely, relaxed, comfortable, unique are characteristics hostellers comment that a great hostel must have. This is one of the most challenging features to manage, due to its intangible character. However, a supportive staff, like-minded travellers and well-planned communal facilities can enhance the probability to create a positive atmosphere for travellers.
- Guests' interaction is the sixth feature mentioned. Other guests have a stronger power of influence in hostels compared to other sort of accommodation, because the shared facilities promote a higher level of encounters. In this mode, hostellers expect to meet people who are fun, outgoing, curious, and who are also communicative and from different parts of the world. This is another challenge aspect that hostels must manage, however creating an ambiance of privacy inside the rooms (e.g. curtains in beds, silence in bedrooms) and of interaction

outside them (e.g. events, lounges) could improve the possibility of those interactions being positive.

- Cleanliness is mentioned as the seventh feature and is mostly related with the facilities of the hostel. Hostellers valorise when the hostel is continuously cleaned and organized. And also to keep a tidy hostel is a way to appeal to guests' sense of aesthetics. According to hostellers' comments a clean hostel imposes more respect for the place and encourages all the guests to maintain a collective standard of cleanliness.
- Design and decoration appears as the eighth key feature and refers to the aesthetical, planning aspects of the hostel's facilities, the architecture of the building, the disposition of spaces and the decorative elements. Hostellers appreciate when the design is beautiful but functional (e.g. lockers under the bunk beds, the facilities are well-planned, lights and charges near the bed), and valorise well-planned facilities that are able to create an environment of socialization (e.g. lounges, terraces). Beyond that decoration must be beautiful, modern and/or remain faithful to a theme (e.g. family house, surf, wine).
- Value for money appears in the ninth position and is related with the perception of the good use of the money invested, appealing to cognitive value dimensions of a customer experience. Hostellers mentioned some sort of supplementary services as being an investment that is worth it, some examples are: dinners, pub crawls and towels for rent.
- Finally, safety is mentioned referring to two dimensions: inside the facilities and outside the facilities. Inside the hostel, guests valorise when they have lockers to keep their bags and personal objects, while outside they valorise a hostel which is in a nice and safe neighbourhood.



## CHAPTER 8 Data analysis and Findings: Statistically exploring the hostel experience

Chapter 8 describes all the exploratory statistical process undergone to reach the theoretical framework. The exploratory process was divided in two parts. First, the 'appeals' of a positive hostel experience (PHE) address the aspects explaining the nature of a hostel experience. Then, the hostel experience enhancers, refer to those elements in the servicescape that can intensify a positive experience. All the process was statistically based on factor analysis and multiple regressions to unveil the positive hostel experience.



Figure 76 Sources chapter 8

### 8.1 Exploratory factor analysis

#### 8.1.2 Assumptions

For the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) the sample was of N=407 respondents who correspond to those who stayed in hostels at least once. We used EFA to uncover the underlying dimensions of the 407 guests' hostel experiences for a positive Hostel Experience. This EFA enabled to identify and to purify the latent constructs through an iterative process and permitted the identification of the underlying patterns of relationships within the data (correlations). The initial factors were extracted from the literature plus netnographic content analysis, but it was possible to lapidate the instrument through the factor analytic technique.

EFA was run on software SPSS 24.0, and was rotated to terminal factors using varimax rotation, which centres on simplifying the columns of the factor matrix (Nie et al, 1975), and is the most used rotation in social sciences papers. The tests followed some criterion explained in literature for a robust measure of sampling adequacy that is appropriate for EFA, as following: (a) eigen- values greater than 1.0 (Kaiser,1960); (b) scree test, which involves an examination of a plot of the eigenvalues for breaks (Cattell, 1966); (c) the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity, significant at the  $p \leq .05$  level (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001).

During this iterative process, variables were deleted following some statistical criteria, if they: (1) did not load more than .50 on any factor (Pestana and Gageiro, 2000), or (2) cross-loaded on two or more factors with loadings higher than .40 (Hatcher 1994; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). Beyond that, to be a reliable measurement the instrument

needs to produce results in a consistent way whenever repeated measurements are executed (Malhotra, 2009).

Measuring scale reliability in which a total score is obtained by summing several items is often performed via internal consistency. In our study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient met the recommended cut-off point of 0.60 for exploratory research (Malhotra, 2009). So, in our study we calculated a standardized alpha for each factor with and without each suspect variable. If a factor's reliability score could be improved by removing any variable, that item was eliminated, and a new alpha score was computed. This process continued until no further improvement in reliability scores could be made on each identified factor. Besides these statistical criteria, we evaluated each of these items for face validity. This exploratory process resulted in two different tests: (1) the re-arrangement of the 23 items in the remaining 21, explaining four 'appeals' of a positive hostel experience (see item 8.1.2); (2) the re-arrangement of 47 items in the remaining 30, unveiling the enhancers of hostel experience in eight latent constructs (see item 8.1.3 of this chapter).

### *8.1.2 Identifying the 'appeals' of a positive hostel experience*

Findings indicate that four dimensions compose the hostel experience. The dimensions vary from a mean of 3.5 to 4.4 in a scale of 1 to 5, conferring that all the components are positioned in the scale, from important to very important (table 34).

Table 34 Descriptive Statistics Positive Hostel Experience

<i>Dimensions N=407</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>St. Deviation</i>
Social	3,6768	,90071
Emotional	3,5860	,86285
Cognitive	4,4521	,52479
Sensorial	3,9060	,73544

Scale from 1: not important to 5: very important

Each dimension comprises from eight to four items with loading equal or higher than .551. The alpha levels are consistently high, ranging from 936 from .616, with total index having an alpha level of .881. According to EFA tests (table 35), the four dimensions explains 63.60% of overall customer experience, and according to assumptions explained in item 8.1, all factors are quite robust and can be readily interpreted.

Table 35 Exploratory factor analysis of positive hostel experience

<i>Positive hostel experience (N=407)</i>	<i>Eigenvalue</i>	<i>Explained (%)</i>	<i>Cronbach alpha</i>	<i>Factor Loadings</i>
<i>Social (8 items)</i>	5.75	27.40%	.936	
I share moments with new fellows				,894
I make new friends				,890
I listen to other guest's stories				,878
I interact with people				,873
I feel part of the travellers' community				,857
I learn with other guests				,731
I take part in social activities (e.g. pub crawl)				,732
I share the spaces				,672
<i>Emotional (5 items)</i>	3.52	16.76%	.888	
I feel safe and comfortable				,852
I feel relaxed				,806
I feel at home				,801
I feel happy				,786
I change my mood positively				,783
<i>Cognitive (4 items)</i>	2.05	9.77%	.616	
I can get a good value for money				,786
Everything is kept clean				,640
The temperature is pleasant				,630
I get fast and simple services				,551
<i>Sensorial (4 items)</i>	2.02	9.65%	.634	
I see beautiful surroundings				,731
I see a good sense of aesthetics				,712
I taste local flavours				,662
I listen to a nice background music				,602

Note: KMO= 0.903, (Bartlett test of sphericity 4784.009; p=0.00) total variance explained 63.60%, total reliability .881 for 21 items

**Social** was the component that explained majority of overall hosteller experience (27.40%), a component of hostel experience that refers to interactions and sharing. It involves guests' perceptions of sharing, not only the facilities but also travel stories. The social dimension is strictly related with the fact that hostel stay can provide a sense of being part of that community. A hostel can leverage on social component by providing social activities and encouraging guests to interact with people.

**Emotional** component explained 16.76% of overall hosteller experience and it is related with guest's moods and feelings. A hostel can generate emotional bonds with guests by proving that a positive stay that can be linked with the feelings of comfort, relaxation and happiness, for instance.

**Cognitive** component explains 9.77% of hosteller experience and it relates to conscious mental processes. A hostel can offer manners of simplifying the stay presenting fast and

simple solutions to guests' problems, or offering advantages that other hostels don't do, for instance a better value for money.

**Sensorial** component explains 9.65% of hosteller experience and it is the component that stimulates guests' senses. By addressing guests' sight, taste, hearing, etc. hostels can arouse hostellers' excitement/satisfaction. Hostels can take advantage, of city landscapes or gastronomy to create a sensorial stimulus in guests, for instance.

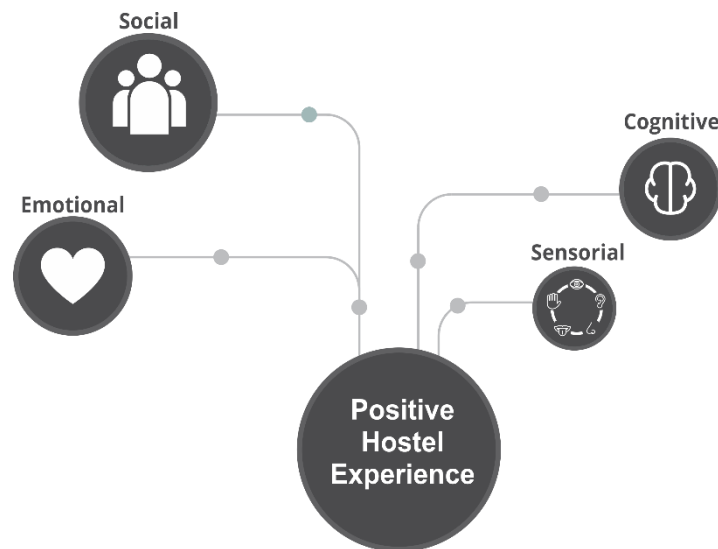


Figure 77 Dimensions of a positive hostel experience

The four main appeals unveiled (figure 77) are further explained in the model proposed (chapter 9) and are in consonance with those dimensions found in literature review (see section 2.4.2). Additionally, as quantitative findings revealed more relevance to the social appeal on a positive hostel experience, data also confirm the social aspect discussed in the qualitative phase showing consonance with previous studies that highlight that hostel differentiation is on the social/friendly atmosphere (Radha, 2015; Brochado, Rita & Gameiro, 2015; Musa & Thirumoorthi, 2011; Murphy, 2001), and that hostel stay carries a more symbolic meaning rather than utilitarian purpose (Sun et al, 2014).

### 8.1.3 Identifying the enhancers of a positive hostel experience

Findings indicate that eight components highlight as enhancers of hostel experience. The components vary from a mean of 3.37 to 4.81 in a scale of 1 to 5, conferring that all the components are positioned in the scale from important to very important (table 36). Each dimension comprises of two to five items with loading equal or higher than .544. The alpha levels are consistently high, ranging from .615 from .883, with total index having an alpha level of .873. According to EFA tests (table 37), the eight dimensions explain 66.3% of overall enhancers of hostel experience, and according to assumptions explained in methodology chapter, all factors are quite robust and can be readily interpreted (table 4).

Table 36 Distribution Scores for the Hostel Experience Enhancers Index: Means, Standard Deviation, Skewness, Kurtosis, and Percentage Indicating Level of Importance

<i>Experiential Enhancers in hostels</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>St.D</i>	<i>Skewness</i>	<i>Kurtosis</i>	<i>Importance* (%)</i>
<i>Safety &amp; Cleanliness (4 items)</i>	4,81	0,382	-2,734	8,445	96,6
Hostel provides security to my belongings	4,87	0,437	-4,033	18,122	97,5
Facilities make me feel safe	4,82	0,467	-2,752	7,784	97,0
Hostel is in a safe neighbourhood	4,71	0,576	-1,977	3,546	94,9
Hostel is clean	4,87	0,403	-3,703	16,497	98,5
<i>Convenience (4 items)</i>	4,70	0,426	-1,543	1,939	94,3
Hostel is close to public transportation	4,76	0,502	-2,117	4,391	97,0
Hostel is near the main tourist attractions	4,55	0,727	-1,576	2,071	89,2
Staff provide information about the city	4,78	0,481	-2,244	5,165	97,6
Hostel has a fast and simple check in	4,72	0,579	-2,331	6,430	95,0
<i>Value for money (2 items)</i>	4,55	0,694	-1,817	3,679	86,5
Breakfast is included in the price	4,44	0,897	-1,800	3,056	86,3
Hostel offers additional services (i.e. towels, vending machines)	4,66	0,712	-2,228	4,942	90,4
<i>Staff (3 items)</i>	4,37	0,678	-0,803	-0,343	78,6
Staff treats me friendly	4,23	0,959	-0,975	-0,064	76,2
Staff shows that they care about me	4,69	0,595	-1,806	2,429	93,6
Staff is cool	4,20	0,978	-1,006	0,160	75,9
<i>Other guests (5 items)</i>	4,05	0,808	-0,561	-0,397	71,50
Guests are from different nationalities	4,07	0,971	-0,792	-0,053	52,3
Guests are communicative and outgoing	4,15	0,906	-0,815	0,046	75,9
Guests are friendly	3,83	0,983	-0,417	-0,522	62,1
Guests are open-minded	4,08	0,911	-0,657	-0,337	73,2
Guests have common interests with me	4,23	0,658	-0,644	-0,522	71,5
<i>Comfort &amp; Relax (3 items)</i>	4,09	0,663	-0,644	0,804	66,8
Hostel is homely and welcoming	4,04	0,924	-0,657	-0,128	71,5
Hostel has a calm atmosphere	3,71	1,004	-0,397	-0,360	58,0
Facilities are comfortable	4,52	0,687	-1,427	2,115	91,7
<i>Design &amp; Decoration (4 items)</i>	4,31	0,838	-1,013	0,440	65,6
Hostel has a nice architecture	4,05	0,978	-0,745	-0,154	71,0
Hostel has well planned facilities	4,56	0,659	-1,303	0,881	91,6
Hostel has an attractive decoration	4,42	0,802	-1,120	0,201	84,1
Hostel is modern	3,86	1,060	-0,645	-0,218	63,6
<i>Entertainment (5 items)</i>	3,37	0,952	-0,283	-0,499	31,40
Hostel offers tours and pub crawls	3,41	1,279	-0,251	-0,975	46,0
Hostel has a bar	3,47	1,278	-0,383	-0,847	49,4
Hostel organizes social events	3,43	1,205	-0,334	-0,705	47,7
Hostel has a fun/party atmosphere	3,02	1,173	-0,043	-0,763	34,4
Hostel is close to nightlife	3,55	1,221	-0,392	-0,795	51,9
Total	4.27	0,385	-0,652	0,351	76.7

\*Percentages shown combine 4 and 5 on the scale of 1 = not important

Table 37 Exploratory factor analysis of Hostel Experience Enhancers

<i>Hostel Experience Enhancers (N=407)</i>	<i>Eigenvalue</i>	<i>Explained (%)</i>	<i>Cronbach alpha</i>	<i>Factor Loadings</i>
<i>Entertainment (5 items)</i>	3.28	10.9	.832	
Hostel offers tours and pub crawls				,800
Hostel has a bar				,737
Hostel organizes social events				,724
Hostel has a fun/party atmosphere				,704
Hostel is close to nightlife				,666
<i>Other guests (5 items)</i>	3.12	10.4	.883	
Guests are from different nationalities				,763
Guests are communicative and outgoing				,744
Guests are friendly				,718
Guests are open-minded				,701
Guests have common interests with me				,601
<i>Design &amp; Decoration (4 items)</i>	3.11	10.37	.805	
Hostel has a nice architecture				,864
Hostel has well planned facilities				,858
Hostel has an attractive decoration				,801
Hostel is modern				,795
<i>Safety &amp; Cleanliness (4 items)</i>	2.90	9.69	.818	
Hostel provides security to my belongings				,834
Facilities make me feel safe				,805
Hostel is in a safe neighbourhood				,720
Hostel is clean				,698
<i>Convenience (4 items)</i>	2.32	7.73	.716	
Hostel is close to public transportation				,759
Hostel is near the main tourist attractions				,755
Staff provide information about the city				,594
Hostel has a fast and simple check in				,544
<i>Comfort &amp; Relax (3 items)</i>	1.82	6.06	.615	
Hostel is homely and welcoming				,789
Hostel has a calm atmosphere				,702
Facilities are comfortable				,632
<i>Staff interaction (3 items)</i>	1.81	6.05	.693	
Staff treats me friendly				,779
Staff shows that they care about me				,673
Staff is cool				,599
<i>Value for money (2 items)</i>	1.49	4.98	.640	
Breakfast is included in the price				,854
Hostel offers additional services (i.e.towels, vending machines)				,742

Note: KMO= 0.858, (Bartlett test of sphericity 5275.762; p=0.00) total variance explained 66.3%, total reliability .872 for 30 items

**Entertainment** is the enhancer that refers how hostels might create a fun and social atmosphere. This component describes that hostels can go beyond their core service (offer dorms) to expand as a lodging-entertaining space for travellers. That can be achieved by offering a bar at the hostel, events, tours or pub crawls to break the ice among guests or for being located close to the city nightlife.

**Design and Decoration:** A nice design and decoration may reinforce a positive image of the hostel in guests' minds and could arouse guests' sense of aesthetics. The architecture of the building, planned facilities and an attractive decoration are ways for hostels to improve their offering.

The **other guests** can have great impact on customer experience (Miao and Mattila, 2011). Because in hostels, guests are constantly sharing spaces with others, the quality

of their interactions can enhance the service experience. Hostellers in their stay like to meet people from different nationalities, who are outgoing, friendly and open-minded. In sum, when staying in hostels, they wish to meet like-minded travellers. But, as this is probably the hardest factor to manage in a hostel-stay, they can always try to reach specific targets (couples, groups, youngers) and or create a positive environment for guests to interact with each other.

**Safety and Cleanliness** factor combines qualities as cleanliness of hostels areas, such as bathrooms, bedrooms and common areas and security issues that encompasses a safe neighbourhood and security to guests' belongings.

**Convenience** is related to how hostel services are useful in attending guests' needs. It encompasses a good location (near to public transportation and main attractions), and efficiency in services such as fast check- in and provision of useful information.

**Comfort & Relax** refers mainly to the manner of how comfortable guests are in hostels' facilities (bedrooms, common rooms) and how hostels can provide moments of welcoming and relaxation.

**Staff** interactions englobe staff attitudes and behaviour towards the guests.

**Value for money:** to offer additional services included in the price, such as breakfast, towels, sheets, etc. are strategies which enhances service experience, increasing customer notion that the fee paid is worthwhile.

## 8.2 Multiple regression analysis

### *8.2.1 Assumptions*

For multiple linear regression some key conditions were assumed: (1) there is a linear or curvilinear relationship shown by predicted Y values; (2) variables are normally distributed; (3) there is no multicollinearity which means that variables are not highly correlated with each other; (4) there is homoscedasticity which means that the variance of error terms are similar across the independent variables (Pestana and Gageiro, 2000).

Multiple linear regression was run on SPSS 24.0 in which all the assumptions were reached. Linear condition and homoscedasticity were checked through the scatterplot that confirmed sample's normality conditions. Outliers were not considered influential as due to Cook's distance. Predictors are not overly correlated as none of them is higher than 0.7. Beyond that, collinearity statistics show recommended level of tolerance  $>.10$  and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) lower than 4 for all factors (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). Following VIF and correlation (tables 38 and 39):

Table 38 Measurements and model collinearity statistics

<i>Independent variables</i>	<i>Tolerance</i>	<i>VIF</i>
Entertainment	,628	1,593
Design	,808	1,237
Other guests	,590	1,696
Safety & Cleanliness	,708	1,412
Convenience	,636	1,573
Comfort	,826	1,211
Value for money	,804	1,244
Staff	,650	1,538

Table 39 Correlations

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>St.D</i>	<i>Hex</i>	<i>Ent</i>	<i>Des</i>	<i>Otg</i>	<i>S&amp;C</i>	<i>Cnv</i>	<i>Cmf</i>	<i>InS</i>	<i>Sta</i>
Hex	3,90	0,51									
Ent	3,37	0,95	,560**								
Des	4,05	0,8	,271**	,246**							
Otg	4,24	0,65	,636**	,492**	,214**						
S&C	4,82	0,38	,247**	,111*	,311**	,184**					
Cnv	4,70	0,42	,290**	,331**	,368**	,248**	,450**				
Cmf	4,09	0,66	0,091	-,140**	,151**	,098*	,322**	,182**			
VfM	4,55	0,69	,235**	,255**	,236**	,202**	,279**	,398**	,115*		
Sta	4,37	0,67	,429**	,396**	,199**	,558**	,203**	,276**	,113*	,206**	

\*\* Correlation is significant at level 0,01 (bilateral).

\* Correlation is significant at level 0,05 (bilateral).

### 8.2.2 Testing hypothesis

Extracting the constructs from exploratory analysis, it was assumed that there are 8 main elements explaining the positive hostel experience. However, to measure whether each element positively influence the hostel experience, the following hypothesis were tested:

- H1. Entertainment enhances positively HE
- H2. Design enhances positively HE
- H3. Other guests enhance positively HE
- H4. Safety and Cleanliness enhance positively HE
- H5. Convenience enhances positively HE
- H6. Comfort enhances positively HE
- H7. Value for money enhances positively HE
- H8. Staff enhance positively HE

Usually, the relations between variables are statistically confirmed in the confident level between 95-99% ( $p < 0.05$  or  $0.01$ ). However, if considering that linear regression does not determine the causality, but still gives tips about the relations between the elements, a broader confidence level may be taken into consideration. Thus, in this study it is



assumed that all the eight independent variables may affect the dependent one, although at different levels:

- From 95% to 99% it is a very high confidence level;
- From 80-90% is a high level;
- From 40-50% is medium level;
- Above that is a low level of confidence.

Results of multiple regression analysis are shown as following (table 40 and figure 78):

Table 40 Results of testing of independent variables to depend variable

Factors enhancing Hostel Experience	$\beta$ coefficients	Sig.
H1 Entertainment	,320	0.000**
H2 Design	,058	0.140
H3 Other guests	,427	0.000**
H4 Safety and Cleanliness	,091	0.030*
H5 Convenience	-,010	0.829
H6 Comfort	,053	0.176
H7 Value for money	,020	0.614
H8 Staff	,027	0.538
Adjusted R square (n=407)	,497	

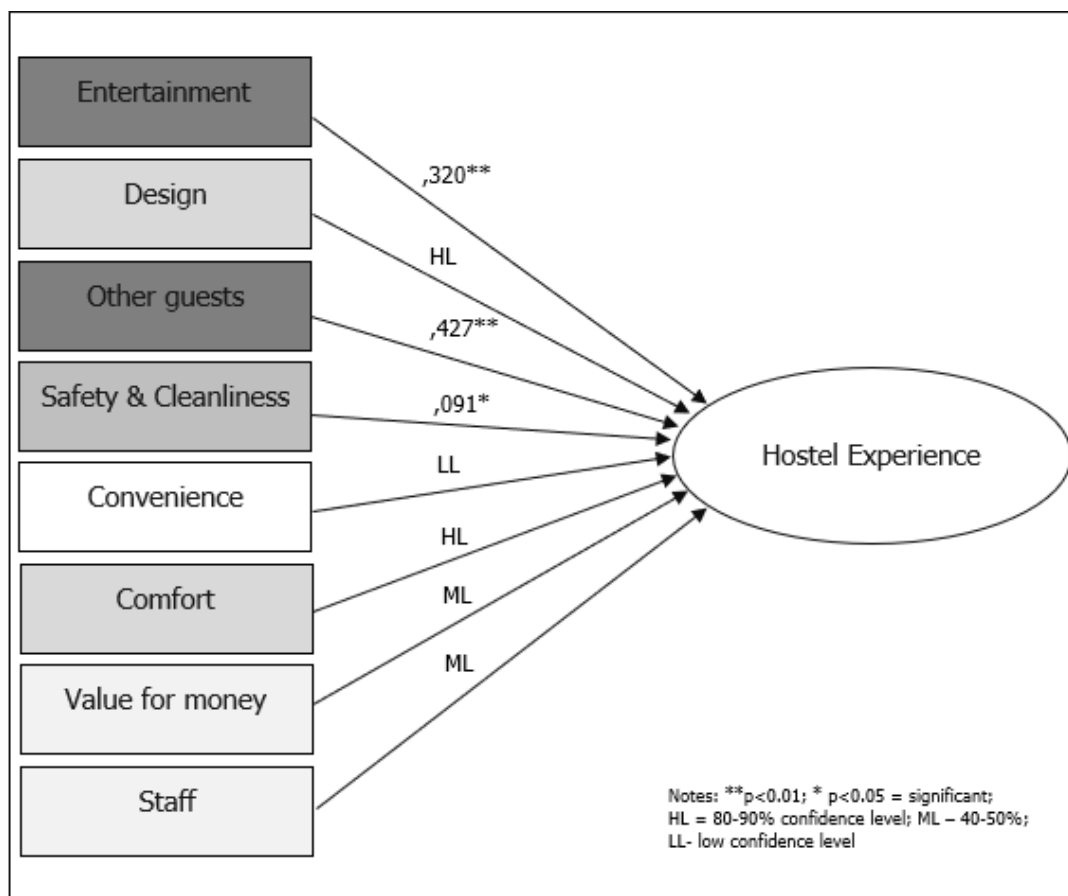


Figure 78 Conceptual model of enhancers influencing a positive hostel experience

Other guests and entertainment are statistically significant at 99% of confidence level, while safety and cleanliness are statistically significant at 95%. Thus, it could be considered that those three elements affect a positive hostel experience at a very high level. Design and comfort addressed an 80-90% confidence level and can both be considered elements highly influential to the hostel experience. The staff and value for money, in turn, showed a significance up to 50%, and may be considered at a medium level of influence, while the convenience showed the lowest confidence level of all.

### *Summary Chapter 8*

- Exploratory factor analysis unveiled four main dimensions of hostels positive experience which refer to (1) social (2) emotional (3) cognitive and (4) sensorial appeals;
- The relevance of social dimension sustains the facts that a hostel experience carries a more symbolic than utilitarian purpose as well as their social/friendly atmosphere is a factor of differentiation from other type of accommodation;
- The exploratory analysis also unveiled eight main factors that influence the positive hostel experience which are as following: other guests, entertainment, safety and cleanliness, design and decoration, comfort, staff, value for money and convenience.
- From the eight factors, multiple regression analysis showed that entertainment, other guests and safety and cleanliness are those with statistical significance to the hostel experience, although it is assumed that all the other factors positively influence the hostel experience whether in different levels.

## CHAPTER 9 Development of a model of enhanced-experiences at hostels

Chapter 9 describes the model which was designed to sum up the discussions emerging from literature review and findings presented in chapters from 4 to 9 (figure 79). In this frame, this chapter aims at discussing the theoretical and practical relevance of the model. Furthermore, a detailed discussion is provided to offer insights into how each component has been conceptualised to explain the service experience at hostels. The subsequent sections will explain the inputs that guests carry within the hostel stay (section 9.1), the enhancers of the hostel environment (section 9.2) which have the power to trigger the hostel experience, as well as describing the nature of the positive hostel experience (section 9.3).

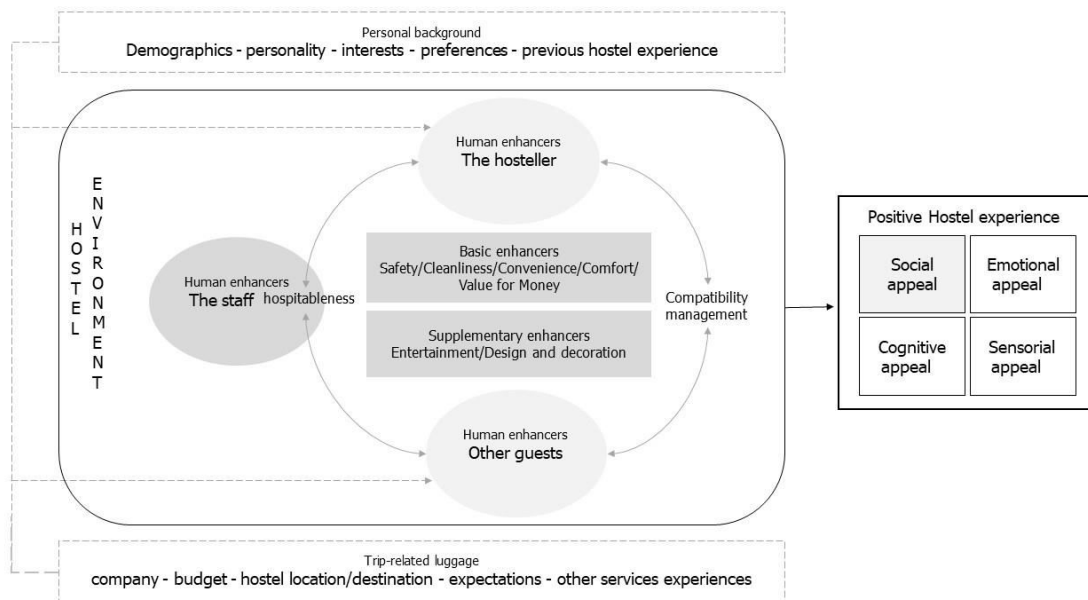


Figure 79 Theoretical model of enhanced experiences at hostels

### 9.1 The guests' background

As discussed along this study (2.1 and 2.4.1) the experience can be considered personal and subjective so, when the guests enter in contact with a hostel service, as individuals they carry with them a series of elements that affect their behaviour, expectations and who they are. And, although those elements are out of the hostel environment scope, the findings of this study supported by the literature identified they play an important role in the context of hostel experience. It is in this vein that the model considers that the inputs guests bring to hostel encounters affect their quality and consequently how they evaluate and perceive a hostel experience as positive or negative. Those inputs are described as the guests' personal and trip-related background. The personal background refers to guests' demographic characteristics, personality, interests, preferences and if they have previous experience with hostels services. On the other hand, the trip-related

background includes elements that refer to the trip in which the hostel experience is just a part of the overall travel experience. In that case, who they travel with, their budget, the expectations they have towards the destination and the hostel itself, as well the quality of experience with other services (e.g. airline companies, transportation) will all together influence guest's mood and behaviour. The personal and trip-related 'background' are elements that hostels do not have the power to modify, however they are able to manage situations and elements in their environment capable of positively affecting the guest experience.

## **9.2 The hostel environment enhancers**

There are three groups of enhancers presented as elements inside a hostel environment, capable of improving customer experience: basic enhancers, supplementary enhancers and human enhancers. The basic enhancers englobe safety, cleanliness, convenience, comfort and value for money and refer to a set of elements which customers consider as a 'must have' to feel their stay in a hostel is worthwhile. In this mode, reaching all or at least most of those elements is fundamental for those hostels planning to change into experience-centric services. The supplementary enhancers are those elements capable of raising a service level, thus, it is suggested that entertainment and design and decoration are the enhancers that can facilitate the social environment and bring an upscale touch to hostels' core service. Finally, there are the human enhancers which orbit around the other enhancers while interacting with each other. The hosteller, the staff and other guests, all together, bring the human element needed to trigger the social atmosphere required in a hostel stay. Moreover, as the social interaction facilitates the core experience (Klaus & Maklan, 2011), they are crucial elements to enhance the perception that a hostel stay is positive. However, while service providers may have control over basic and supplementary enhancers, in the case of human enhancers this 'control' can be more demanding. But, in the possession of the knowledge that guests carries a set of personal and trip-related background, the purposed model suggests that there are two main tools that service providers can rely on to better manage human aspects. Firstly, it is necessary to instil in the staff a sense of hospitableness<sup>13</sup> towards the guests, as they are the personification of the hostel service (discussed in section 7.3.1). Secondly, hostel managers must be aware that the compatibility among guests can be managed this will allow hostels to create an environment where the guests can find like-minded travellers, thus increasing the possibilities of more positive interactions between them (previous discussed in sections 2.2.2.5 and 7.3.6).

## **9.3 The positive experience as outcome**

The model discusses how to manage internal and external elements to trigger a positive experience in customer's mind but also discusses from which constructs a hostel

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<sup>13</sup> It is considered as hospitableness the disposition of welcoming and be friendly to guests, differently from hospitality which is approached along the thesis as the industry within tourism which the accommodation sector is part of.

experience is made of (further explored in sections 2.4.2 and 10.1.2). It is suggested that the experience involves: social, emotional, cognitive and sensorial appeals and from those four, the social appeal is the one that holds a great power for improving the hostel experience. Firstly, because the hostel is a type of accommodation essentially based on the sharing-concept, and secondly because hostels are spaces that foster interactions. In this mode, the model purposes that enhancers that have a social appeal or at least are mediated by it, hold the strongest potential to enhance the hostel experience. However, it is also suggested that the more the four appeals are activated together, the greater the service providers' capacity will be for triggering a positive experience (table 41).

Table 41 How can hostels trigger a positive experience?

<b><i>Appeals</i></b>	<b><i>Application to hostels</i></b>
<b>EMOTIONAL</b>	
Hostels can co-create with customers a feeling of being welcomed, feel at home, sense of fun, party, adventure, feeling safe and comfortable, with happy and friendly moods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hostels can co-create with customers a homely, welcoming, and relaxing feeling;</li> <li>- Services and activities help to create a sense of fun and adventure;</li> <li>- Guests valorise the feeling of safety inside and outside the hostel and comfort in facilities;</li> <li>- Staff and other travellers hold the power to turn into positive hostellers' mood and create a friendly environment.</li> </ul>
<b>SENSORIAL</b>	
Hostels can arouse Hearing, Vision, Smell, Touch, and Taste of customers through their services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Music in common areas affect the hostel atmosphere positively, while no stimuli of sounds (no noise) in bedrooms is valorised;</li> <li>- Sight is stimulated through design and décor of the hostel and common areas; guests like to appreciate beautiful landscapes inside hostels or outside through services such as tours;</li> <li>- Guests are stimulated positively when they detect "smell of cleanliness" in hostel's spaces;</li> <li>- Touch is aroused mainly through a comfortable and warm temperature inside spaces, such as airy common areas, warm bedrooms and hot showers;</li> <li>- Taste is aroused through meals and drinks, breakfast and activities such as dinners. Guests valorise fresh and homemade food, a tasty meal arouses the sensorial experience.</li> </ul>
<b>COGNITIVE</b>	
Customers have a global judgement of tidy and quality of facilities, they have a perception of good value for money in hostel's services and they want to learn with other guests, furthermore staff should be engaged in problem solving with fast services solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Judgement of tidy facilities;</li> <li>- Professional staff which are up to solve customer's problems;</li> <li>- Customers valorise the learning process in hostels, with the comprehension of getting knowledge through traveller's interactions;</li> <li>- Perception of good value for money (cheap prices) and no extra payment for the services;</li> <li>- Evaluation of a hostel in central location near the main tourist attractions and transport, markets.</li> </ul>
<b>SOCIAL</b>	
Hostels can improve the environment to create positive interactions between guests and staff, and guest with other guests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hostels' facilities should stimulate the socialization among guests;</li> <li>- Activities such as dinners and tours must stimulate a sociable atmosphere;</li> <li>- Staff help to create a friendly atmosphere and customers wants to see staff as friends;</li> </ul>

(continue)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Customers wants to make friends in the hostel, to feel part of a community/family;</li><li>- Customers want to interact with staff and other guests to share experiences and to gain travel tips</li></ul>
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## CHAPTER 10 Conclusions and Implications

Chapter 10 as the final chapter, summarizes the thesis. Firstly, it demonstrates how the research objectives were achieved, culminating in addressing the contributions of the study in its theoretical, empirical and sectorial implications. Furthermore, the chapter describes the limitations of the study, reflecting on a comprehensive agenda with opportunities for further research. Finally, the chapter goes on to address personal reflection on the PhD journey and final remarks.

### 10.1 Achievement of research aim and objectives

This thesis aimed at exploring the role of service experience in the context of hostels to address an important gap in services management and tourism research with respect to the empirical study of experience management in tourism businesses. To complement existing perspectives in that issue, this research used a mix-methods approach based on four different phases: documental analysis, ethnographic fieldwork, netnographic content analysis and statistical analysis. In this mode, the aim of this research was achieved by analysing in detail, evidences from Brazilian and Portuguese hostel's market. In this thesis, the organisation of data analysis and findings chapters reflects the purposed research objectives, which are summarized as following:

#### *10.1.1 RO1. To bring empirical evidence on how the hostel market develops in distinctive contexts such as Brazil and Portugal*

This objective was addressed in chapter 4 and was achieved through the analysis of secondary sources, such as: reports, legislation, official tourism entities' database, online news and primary sources retrieved from the questionnaire applied to hostels' businesses. Both sources were crucial to picture a contemporary panorama and go deeper on the understanding of Brazilian and Portuguese hostel market development. By examining the current situation in both countries, this thesis unveils that they are very distinctive and not equally comparable especially because tourism plays a different role in their economy and governmental policies. Although with many peculiarities, the two countries showed to be a fruitful field for hostels' development, especially because in the last five years, in both countries there was an increasing in the creation of new hostels and a continuous growth of mentions to hostels in the media, suggesting an increasing interest from customer's side. Considering this evidence, the insights gathered led to conclude that Brazil and Portugal should be considered important players on hostels' market, especially within Latin America and Europe contexts, respectively. And this is because beyond following the worldwide hostels 'trend', in what concerns their expansion, their example also remarks the change of paradigms that hostels dynamics represent to hospitality industry and tourism services.

### *10.1.2 RO2. To identify and characterize successful hostels' practices based on what customers perceive as a positive service experience*

The second research objective was addressed in chapter 5 and achieved due to the identification of five hostels that used to be recognized by customers as offering a superior stay. The selected cases were based on the information available at the largest hostel OTA database, while the further characterization of those successful practices was based on the information available on each hostel's website and the data collected from the ethnographic fieldwork.

This analysis has contributed to an understanding from within of how those hostels are operated, while having a better perception of how the hostel's community consider the service they deliver as a positive experience. As a result, the thesis addressed that although each case studied has singularities, all the hostels analysed as well-rated, strive to please customers by using a set of tools and strategies that mainly goes through the customer-to-customer compatibility, the creation of a hospitableness environment and the offering of supplementary services.

Moreover, getting to know those cases showed a different perspective from what it is sustained on literature that hostels are a budget-oriented and low-profile accommodation. On the contrary, those examples support the idea of a changing nature in hostels market, especially because if before hostels they used to simply offer a cheap bed in dormitories, on the other hand, nowadays, contemporary hostels are upgrading that concept by offering an affordable bed in a shared environment that many times comes associated with a set of additional services. To sum up, the thesis reinforces that hostels example can be interpreted as if being a budget accommodation does not limit their quality and capacity to fulfil customer's needs.

### *10.1.3 RO3. To examine the determinants (contextual, psychographics, demographics, etc.) of a hostel-stay*

This objective was addressed on chapter 6 and was mainly achieved through data analysis resultant from the questionnaire applied to travellers. Based on the assumption that travellers may have different reasons for choosing to stay or not in hostels, the questionnaire sample allowed an exploratory examination of some determinants of a hostel-stay.

Surprisingly, hostels showed to have a positive effective demand and to also have a significative suppressed demand which represent a potential market for growth. Furthermore, the findings have revealed that there are many differences between those who used to stay at hostels and those who do not. Just to give an example, our findings support the statement that hostels are spaces that enhance the social experience, mainly because among other elements, data analysis confirmed that hostellers are strongly motivated by making new friends when travelling, while regular travellers prefer to rest. However, other roles were identified to influence the choice to stay in a hostel, as for



instance, the location of the hostel, the travel company (e.g. family, friends), the need for privacy and age. Those elements among others, reaffirm how complex the tourist experience is, especially because there are a set of contextual, psychographics and demographics characteristics that travellers' carry within the hostel-stay.

#### *10.1.4 RO4. To identify the key features of a positive hostel experience and describe their nature*

The fourth research objective was addressed through the findings gathered in the netnographic phase, from which results were approached on chapter 7. The findings have uncovered a total of ten main features of a positive hostel experience based on what is narrated by customers. These include: the staff, supplementary services (e.g. activities, breakfast, Wi-Fi), facilities (e.g. common areas, bathrooms, kitchen, etc), location, atmosphere, guests' interactions, cleanliness, design and decoration, value for money and safety. Some of these features are referred in literature as important to other type of tourist accommodation, however in the context of hostels, what highlights is the predominance of those features that play a social and affective role. For instance, even in more functional features such as facilities, customers used to refer to them as spaces of interactions, unveiling the social nature of hostels environment. These results are in consonance with previous studies (e.g. Brochado et al, 2015; Radha, 2015). Additionally, the thesis reinforces the experiential theory that contemporary consumption goes beyond the rational benefit and based on the context of hostels it is possible to affirm that this fact transgresses multiple sectors in tourism industry.

#### *10.1.5 RO5. To determine the elements on hostels environment that contribute to enhance the customer experience*

This objective guided the study to determine the main elements that enhance the hostel experience. The research objective 5 followed the sequence of findings gathered in the netnographic phase and were quantitatively confirmed in chapter 8 due to the data analysis of questionnaires applied to those who have stayed at hostels.

Firstly, findings have uncovered that the positive hostel experience has four main 'appeals: social, emotional, cognitive and sensorial, from which the social showed to have the highest weight in explaining the hostel experience. Additionally, findings determined there are eight main elements in hostel service that contribute to enhance customer experience. Statistically, (1) other guests, (2) entertainment and (3) safety and cleanliness showed to impact a positive customer experience at hostels the most. However, other elements such as: (4) design, (5) comfort, (6) value for money, (7) staff and (8) convenience are either important, although 4 and 5 showed to have higher weight in the PHE, 6 and 7 medium weight and 8 the lowest weight.

*10.1.6 RO6. To develop a model of enhanced hostel experiences that is of theoretical and practical relevance to the contemporary tourism industry.*

This study has addressed its sixth and final Research Objective in chapter 9 by developing a model of enhanced hostel experiences. It was built based on the foundations of the literature review and the findings shown from chapter four to eight. First, it shows the factors that guests input in service experience but that are beyond hostel sphere, which are: (i) the personal background related with guests' demographics, personality, interests, motivations and previous hostel experience and the background guests input related with aspects of the overall trip, which can include the company, the budget, etc. Second, the model shows the components inside the hostel environment that contribute to enhance guests' experience. They are divided in three main enhancers: those considered basic elements that should be provided by any hostel (e.g. cleanliness, comfort, safety, convenience, value for money), the supplementary enhancers or the elements that can differentiate the hostel environment (e.g. entertainment, design and decoration), and finally the human enhancers which englobe the staff, the guest and other guests. Although the human enhancers play a crucial role to create a good environment to positive experiences, managing them can be challenging for companies. Based on that statement the model either indicates the customer-to-customer compatibility as a strategy that hostels may use to enhance a good atmosphere of interactions and the hospitableness as a tool to be used by their staff to facilitate the way to the positive guest experience. Finally, the model reiterates that all these processes can lead to the main outcome pursued - the positive hostel experience, which consists of four main appeals (social, emotional, cognitive, sensorial), from which the social is the most relevant of them.

## **10.2 Contributions of the study**

This section highlights the contributions this study makes to theory and within and beyond tourism industry. It specifically demonstrates the impact and implications this study has on theoretical, empirical and sectorial levels.

### *10.2.1 Theoretical contributions*

The way this thesis meets the criteria of theoretical significance can be synthesised in three main points: (i) on how it contributes to fulfil research gaps, (ii) on how it addresses tourism methodologies development and (iii) on how the purposed model contributes to a holistic reflection over theory.

Firstly, the thesis has filled a gap by unifying three literature streams i.e. tourism, experiences and services, revising on how those concepts interconnect. The thesis contributes to service experience in tourism discussion by indicating that experiences are

subjective and they are intrinsically related with one's inner aspects while being triggered and stimulated in service/consumption encounters. It also reinforces the experience-dominant logic within tourism services and the need for an experiential management for tourism businesses.

Additionally, the thesis identified a lack of service experience studies within different tourism sectors contexts, specifically exploring the budget accommodation sector, with the case of hostels. The thesis fills the gap on hostels academic studies, stressing how hostels contradictorily remains a neglected issue by tourism researchers, even with their increasing relevance on contemporary tourism industry worldwide. Moreover, the thesis fills an important gap concerning the intersection between tourism and hospitality, distinct concepts that are intrinsically connected. Nowadays there is clear evidence on how hospitality operations should be optimized through a chain of production geared with surrounding economic and social environments, considering that a series of stakeholders are important, such as businesses, non-profit organizations, public entities, etc. In this vein, although this thesis is included in the tourism field, it brings evidence on how modern hospitality should be put in practice, basing it in the holistic and systemic perspectives of tourism theory and practice.

Secondly, the thesis inputs contributions to tourism-methodology development by addressing new venues, ways and their associated challenges. By using a mixed-methods approach based on qualitative and quantitative techniques, the thesis brings some 'out of the box' ideas on how it is possible to research on such broader and complex themes such as tourism and experiences. Although it has no claim to serve as a 'what to-do' guide for researchers, it enlightens research possibilities to explore service and tourist experiences beyond the dualism of quantitative versus qualitative studies. In this vein, it is of value to highlight that the online world can serve as a fruitful field to explore contemporary research problems and new methods such as Netnography should be reinforced especially in tourism and consumer studies. Beyond that, the thesis addresses that new approaches such as Netnography together with more traditional techniques as ethnographic observation fit well to enhance research interpretation. Moreover, the thesis also leads the way on how several quantitative data (i.e. word frequency, p values) can be further explored and used to sustain qualitative interpretation in social sciences.

The third and most significant contribution towards theory is the development of a model of enhanced-experiences at hostels. This model provides a comprehensive contribution that maps the complexity of the elements influencing a positive experience considering that specific context. It addresses that there are some inputs that come along with the guest related with personal and trip-related factors. Then it refers that there are also some service environment elements that can enhance experience, bringing to light the relevance of the human aspect in hospitality services. In addition, the model unveils some of the experiential appeals of a hostel experience, stressing the influence of the social dimension in hostels' context. The model also contributes to but extends the theoretical aspect when beyond the empirical information, suggests management tools to enhance customer experience.

### *10.2.2 Empirical contributions*

Beyond its theory relevance, the findings of this study offer several empirical contributions, mainly based on the changing nature of tourism supply-demand dynamics. If in one hand the study contributes to characterize a new hostel market, on the other hand, it also gives evidence of the contemporary profile of hostel's customers.

Some evidence show that hostels are leaving the 'low-fare, low-quality' stigma behind to position themselves as a 'cool' type of accommodation. Our findings suggest that even in different contexts and levels of tourism development, such as Brazil and Portugal, some hostels are being recognized as 'successful cases' leaving trails about this changing nature. Those cases reveal that, based on an experiential core and a set of supplementary services, some hostels are contributing to improve hostel's image.

Additionally, other evidences show that hostel's recognition goes beyond some punctual cases. Our findings show that in the last 5 years there was an increase in the number of mentions about hostels in media, attributing them the status of 'trendy' accommodation. Posh hostels, design hostels, eco-hostels and others are given as examples on how hostels are adapting to contemporary traveller's needs. Beyond that, hostels are reaching broader targets. Our findings reinforce that there is a change on customer's perception regarding hostels because travellers place hostels on the top three in their choice concerning accommodation. Moreover, there is a significant part of travellers willing to stay at hostels, even among those who never stayed at hostels or those who have some sort of prejudice over them.

This uprising and reshaping of hostel market also suffers influence from the demand side. In this vein, the thesis brings empirical contributions by characterizing this new hostel demand, defining the adjustments from the old backpackers to the contemporary hosteller's concept. Our findings suggest that contemporary hosteller's demand is broader and more diversified. Among other characteristics, our results show a trend towards the increase in hostel's guests age and although hostellers indicate to be price-oriented they either value the variety of supplementary services they find at hostels as well as their social atmosphere. Those characteristics bring crucial implications to managers because in some extent this new demand pressures them towards a valuable stay proposal that goes beyond a mere 'cheap bed to sleep', exposing the need of an experiential component and consequently its proper management.

### *10.2.3 Sectorial contributions*

The theoretical and practical contributions of this work have not only relevance to the hostels sector but could potentially be considered as applicable to tourism industry, its sub-sectors and in the wider services marketing and global business domain. Thus, the

sectorial contributions of the thesis are here explained within the hostels and from beyond the hostels domain.

Within the hostels domain, our findings suggest successful ways, or at least good manners, of how to manage hostels. Suggesting experiences as the core of hostels services, the study contributes by revealing: good practices of the hostel market, the main appeals of a hostel experience, situational and contextual factors that customers bring within the hostel environment; the elements into hostel's environment that trigger a positive experience as well as key tools to manage all those elements.

Our main findings lead to the crucial role of social interactions within hostels services and point out to a sort of features that managers can invest in to enhance a positive experience. Bringing entertainment to guests, such as activities and events; equipping the hostel with well-designed facilities, facilitating guest-to-guest interactions as well as orienting the staff to hospitableness showed to be important especially because, all that together, hold the potential to foster customer's silenced needs of home-like, personal care and inclusion.

Furthermore, this study unveils some characteristics of contemporary hostel's customers, as well as some determinant factors of the stay which are crucial for hostel's managers. In this vein, the study has direct implications to those businesses once it provides powerful tools to managers to observe their service weaknesses and potentialize their strengths. Beyond that, by knowing hostellers better and by understanding the motivations behind customers' choice to stay or not at hostels, managers are able to rethink and redirect their targets and consequently be able to provide personalized, unique and enhanced experiences.

Beyond the hostels domain, the thesis also carries broader sectorial contributions. First, looking into the demand side, this study justifies the crucial role of experiences when it reiterates that travellers search for interactions and somehow needing to build some affective ties during the consumption process. Thus, the thesis substantiates the relevance of the experiential aspect, not only to tourism, but to any other industry as a progressive way of the 'economy of affections'.

Furthermore, most hostels are Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). In this mode, the thesis addresses how experiential management can be further applied to other sort of SMEs. As SMEs are a relevant part of tourism industry too, to learn from hostels' cases may help to improve other types of services in the hospitality sector, in tourist accommodation in general, and in other sort of budget-minded accommodation businesses.

Additionally, the thesis addresses sectorial contributions in what concerns the generational cohort of the millennials, alerting managers about their wishes, needs and behaviours. For businesses of almost every sector and especially in services, to have a better understanding of this group opens doors to reach, and above all to please this

increasingly relevant slice of consumer market. In consonance, this thesis either clarifies to some extent about tourism demand's needs and on how companies can design tailor-made travel itineraries.

Finally, this thesis gives few, but valuable insights on how those new types of tourist's accommodation, which emerge boosted by ICT's and new customers' requirements, are reshaping tourism dynamics. Thus, it is necessary to think about policies and planning which englobes the diversity and changing nature of the 'new tourism' offer, to use them in the destination's favour, maintaining their sustainability and preventing their decline.

### **10.3 Limitations of the study**

As an essential part of the research process, the critical reflection upon the limitations of this study should be pointed out. In this vein, the main limitation to be mentioned is the lack in literature concerning tourism and hospitality, not only about a theory that discuss the intersection of those matters from beyond the operations spectrum, but also regarding one important example of contemporary hospitality industry, which are the hostels. This thesis, as a mixed-methods and exploratory study contributes to increase the literature, however further qualitative, quantitative and mix-methods studies are needed to fulfil this underexplored field.

Another limitation is that the study was restricted to the hostel industry. If in one hand this study fills a gap in the literature related with hostels, on the other hand, the changing nature of hostels and their poorly defined concept showed to be a challenging issue to be analysed. Even if this thesis has satisfactorily analysed the cases of Portugal and Brazil, results reiterate the impossibility to apply a comparative study in such distinct contexts. Therefore, this thesis supports the idea that is not easy to apply cross-cultural studies, especially when in different socio-cultural and political settings. Even so, this study reinforces the need for analysing the matter of service experience and hostels under different realities, considering that further studies should embrace those issues.

Beyond that, this thesis has focused specifically on well-rated hostels by the customers, those which can be known as successful cases. This because it was considered that positive aspects of service experience lead the way to improve hospitality services and competitiveness. However, it is known that on the other side of the coin, an overview in regard with the negative aspects, may also add inputs to a holistic understanding and operationalization of experiences. In this mode, further studies opposing the positive experience will contribute to literature too.

Finally, it is worth to mention that a longer and deeper fieldwork, a largest and diversified sample, as well as broader geographical analysis would have strengthened the analysis. In this mode, it is suggested that all the methodological constraints which are explained in chapter 3 (section 3.4) should be reviewed and further studies must take them into consideration.

## 10.4 Agenda for further research

Although this thesis brings important contributes to literature, the 'newness' of the theme together with the limitations of this study reiterate the need for additional research to better understand some crucial aspects concerning hostels market and service experience. Thus, an agenda is therefore set out to encourage scholars to build upon and expand on the findings of this thesis. Emerging from this study, three concrete directions for further research are defined, which include research questions comprehensively to a) services management, b) customer's behaviour, c) tourism planning and development.

### *Services management*

- Can the social environment be successfully designed and managed?
- How to manage customer-to-customer compatibility in tourism services?
- How do customers act in groups and how do these groups influence fellow customers' experience?
- What are the common characteristics of the staff at hostels? How they differ from the traditional tourist accommodation staff (e.g. hotels)?
- How can additional services (e.g. activities) enhance customer experience in other tourism contexts?
- Why are hostels investing in private rooms? Are private bedrooms increasing relevancy over dorms in hostels?

### *Customers' behaviour*

- To what extant customer valorise more additional services over the price?
- Are hostels a niche market? Is there a homogeneous profile of hostel customers? How is the shape of hostellers in distinct contexts?
- To what extent is design and visual appeal a determinant when choosing a tourist accommodation?
- Is gender a determinant of a hostel stay? Do female bedrooms impact women's decision of choosing a hostel?

### *Tourism Planning and Development*

- How is the hostel market developing in other countries?
- To what extent hostels contribute to enhance youth tourism in destinations?
- How are hostels contributing to urban rehabilitation?
- To what extent low-cost flights boost hostel market? What is the role of this phenomenon in distinct countries?
- Is there any relationship between specific legislation/regulation and the increasing of hostel market worldwide?

Those research questions emerged from theoretical and empirical foundations. Some of them are explained in this thesis but it is suggested that further research can contribute

with a broader sample and with the perspectives of other sectors and countries. While other questions, especially in what concerns the tourism planning and development topic, emerged as correlated with our findings but as due to their complexity need to be further investigated and discussed.

## **10.5 Personal reflection and final remarks**

Finally, I would like to look back and evaluate on the remarkable experience that it has been writing this doctoral thesis. This is the only section of the thesis where I write in the first person in order to give a brief overview on my personal reflection and final remarks.

This PhD project started from the need to study an issue that for me was clearly 'booming' on tourism but somehow was being neglected by tourism researchers and practioners. At the time of the beginning of this PhD, I was already living in Portugal and having the opportunity to observe *in loco* on how Portuguese hostel market was reshaping and started to be internationally recognized by its quality. On the other hand, I was also following up on how Brazil, my home country, was expanding its hospitality industry mainly driven by the mega-events that were about to happen. But, at the very beginning, I needed to turn the lack in literature and the comments of 'needless' for into the fuel to develop a research in which I really believed in. Nowadays, four years passed, the relevance media attribute to hostels together with the increase in the number of publications on that issue, confirmed that I was right to bet in a theme that for many was meaningless, but that for me was as relevant as intriguing.

The theoretical foundation on service experience emerged alongside with the empirical need for explaining that phenomenon. As I had a background on studying customer and service experience on the masters, I decided to continue exploring a matter that needed further research. However, I left behind luxury accommodation to go deeper into a context which I identified myself with. The question of identifying and believing in what I was studying was very important to give me the strength to continue the PhD journey.

My previous backpacking experience together with my previous experience as a hosteller gave me the necessary discernment to put myself in the place of the consumer and either of the hostels, what I evaluate as a strong point of my research. However, it was at the same time challenging and a concern for me to positioning myself as the researcher, pragmatically observing the phenomenon in order to minimize a possible research bias.

One of the precious lessons I've learned with this PhD was to create new strategies to overcome adversities in the research process. In research, as well as in life, unexpected situations happen, which sometimes make it impossible to follow the schedule as planned. For instance, in my case, the initial idea of the research project was to work mainly on ICTs and innovation, but in the course of the study other issues were unveiled



turning the first into secondary issues. Furthermore, the lack of funding for field research, and the low rate of respondents I got initially, made me reflect on other strategies to overcome the problem without, however, abdicating the ethics, reliability and robustness needed for my research.

But the biggest challenge I faced on my PhD journey was undoubtedly to deal with the amount of data generated from the choice to conduct a mixed-methods study. Each of the four phases of the research required great dedication from me and the final product of each phase made me reflect and be concerned on how to systematize and better analyse the data to keep a lead in the writing of the thesis, aiming at bringing a robust contribution to the theory and practice of tourism. That said, I assume any gaps or need for review that this work may have, also assuming I gave my best on doing this work which is a result of many years of dedication.

I end this thesis as I began, with a quote from Saramago that for me, more than talking about travel it is a clear metaphor on what is to be a researcher and what is to live the research itself, as is required over a PhD journey.

"...The end of a journey is just the beginning of another. It is necessary to see what has not been seen, to see again what has already been seen, to see in the spring what is seen in the summer, to see by day what was seen at night... One has to go back to the archives, to repeat and to trace new paths alongside them. You have to restart the journey. Always."

My curiosity and search for learning brought me to this incredible adventure which was doing a PhD. For me, the PhD journey was so fascinating and rewarding as it was mentally and personally challenging and demanding too. But I finish this stage with the feeling of accomplishment and with the certainty that this is just one more step to many great projects that are yet to come. Thanks to all whom had the patience to reach the end of this reading. Cheers!



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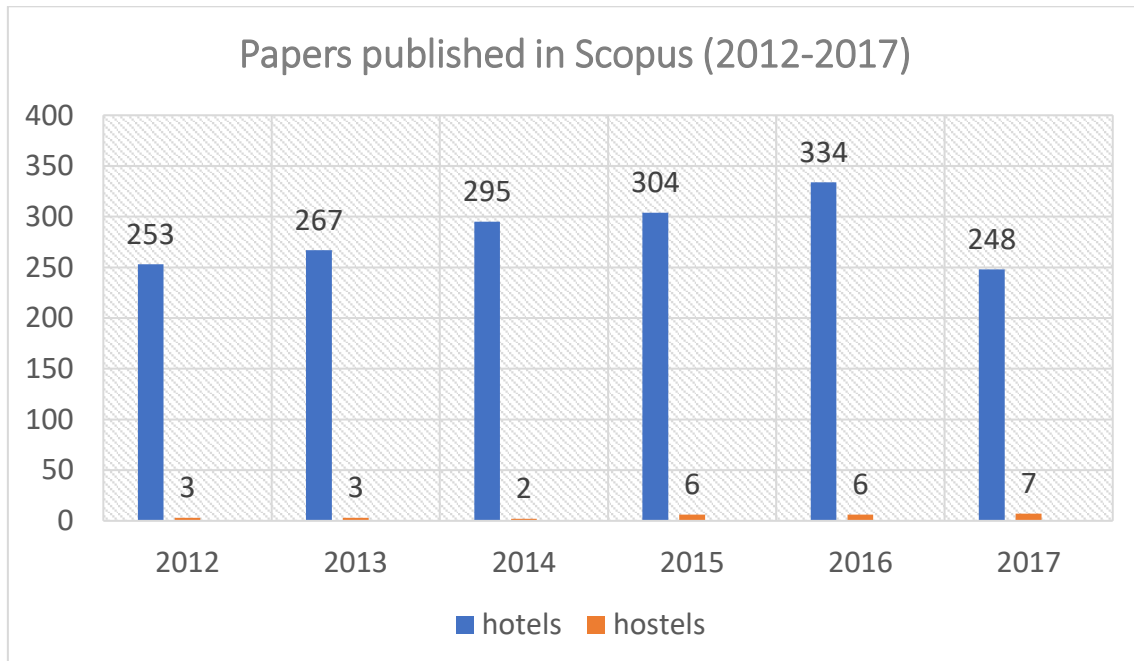


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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Differences in the number of publications: hotels vs hostels



- Total: hotels: 1705 documents and hostels 27 documents
- Search: hotels and tourism; hostels and tourism.

Source: own construction based on Scopus database (November, 2017)

## Appendix 2 Studies supporting the research design process

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Aim of the study</b>	<b>Approach/Data collection and Analysis</b>
Jauhari and Sanjeev (2010)	CA	to provide a background on developments in hospitality and tourism in India and its contribution to economic growth	observation/descriptive case studies
Brida, Meleddu and Pulina (2016)	CA	to analyse to what extent a museum may be regarded as a potential driver for urban tourism.	case studies and questionnaire/ factor analysis, cluster analysis and regression.
Wu (2017)	CA	To investigate the relationship between customer leisure motivation, leisure experience, and customer loyalty intention	questionnaire /exploratory factor analysis, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)
Carlson, Rosenberger & Rahman (2016)	E	To seek a deeper understanding of the forms of value that travel consumers derive from a group-travel experience to a major even	Questionnaire/SEM
Miao & Mattila (2011)	F&B	To examine the impact of other customers on customer experiences from a psychological distance perspective.	Experimental research with control group/ multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA)
Miao (2014)	F&B	to examine the social dynamics among a focal consumer, co-consumption others and Customer Bs at service encounters and the impact of such social dynamics on consumer self-regulatory behavior	scenario-based experimental design, questionnaire/ (MANCOVA)
Klaus & Maklan (2011)	LA	To propose a conceptual model of sports tourism customer experience in the context of a mountain-biking extreme sport camp. Customer	means–end approach / semi-structured interviews with clients of a mountain-biking camp/Content analysis with NVivo
Slåtten, Krogh & Connolly (2011)	LA	to investigate the potential of customer experiences in the tourism industry to influence emotions and thus create positive mental imprints	case studies and questionnaire/ regression analysis
Wan (2013)	LA	To understand the preferences of customers for design types and physical settings to offer products that meet their needs	case studies, face-to-face interviews/descriptives and content analysis
Ali, Kim & Jeon (2016)	LA	To propose a model to assess visitor experience and its effect on their delight, satisfaction and loyalty in Malaysian theme parks.	case studies and questionnaire/SEM
Kolar (2016)	LA	to theoretically and empirically explore tourist experiences with the niche-like, yet global phenomenon of escape room attractions.	netnography (online comments)/ content analysis with Leximancer
Åstrøm (2017)	LA	to investigate the factors that drive the tourist customer experience around theming. Theming is considered vital to creating a memorable customer impression	Questionnaire/regression analysis
Sotiriadis (2017)	LA	To investigate the customers' experience in nature-based attractions and its influence on post consumption behavior	Questionnaire/ descriptive analysis and canonical correlation analysis
Tapar, Dhaigude, and Jawed (2017)	LA	To explore the mediating role of commitment between tourists' satisfaction and behavioural intents,	Questionnaires/SEM

		that is, their revisit intentions (RVIs)	
Carreira, Patrício, Jorge and Magee (2014)	T	to develop a measurement scale for the travel experience	in-depth interviews and questionnaire/ Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)
Tucker & Lynch (2005)	A	To argue for the potential use of lifestyle segmentation in order to achieve psychographic matching between hosts and guests in Bed and Breakfast and homestay accommodation	descriptive case studies
Knutson, Beck, Kim and Cha (2009)	A	To identify the underlying dimensions of a guest's hotel experience, using data from a web-based survey of guests at a midwestern hotel and conference center	exploratory factor analysis
Teng (2011)	A	To investigate international consumer perceptions of their restaurant dining and hotel accommodation experiences to identify the common core elements of hospitality in commercial settings	semi-structured interviews
Torre & Kline (2011)	A	To provide a typology of customer delight in the hotel industry. By doing so, it identifies patterns by which hotels delight their guests.	content analysis of letters of customer feedback provided
Walls, Okumus, Wang and Kwun (2011a)	A	To discuss the theoretical underpinnings of consumer experience by examining the definitions of experience and the contextual nature of consumer experiences	review of secondary data
Walls, Okumus, Wang and Kwun (2011b)	A	To explore the consumer experience by examining empirical data collected via a series of in-depth, semi structured inter- views with luxury hotel guests	semi structured interviews/ content analysis
Alcántar- Alcover, Artacho-Ramírez, Martínez-Guillamón, Campos-Soriano (2013)	A	To present a practical procedure to help managers to move into the experience business in the hospitality sector	questionnaires/ cluster analysis
Bharwani and Jauhari (2013)	A	to identify and map competencies required by frontline employees to enhance guest experience in the hospitality industry, in the context of an emerging experience economy	literature review
Cetin and Dincer (2013)	A	to determine and exhibit the impacts of customer experiences on customer loyalty and recommendation behaviours in hospitality organizations	Questionnaire/ correlation and regression analysis
Peña, Jamilena, Molina (2013)	A	to identify the consumer behaviour variables and the moderating effect of customers' previous experience that generate greater customer loyalty toward rural hospitality enterprises	Questionnaires/ SEM
Walls (2013)	A	to develop a model that identifies influencing dimensions of consumer	questionnaire / factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, SEM

		experiences and investigates the composition of consumer experiences and the relative outcome on consumers' perceived value in a hospitality setting	
Rageh, Melewar & Woodside (2013)	A	to address the question of what are the underlying dimensions that constitute the construct of customer experience	Netnography/content analysis
Cetin and Walls (2015)	A	to explore hospitality experiences from guests' and managers' perspectives	Interviews/ content analysis
Mohsin and Lengler (2015)	A	to test the influence of dimensions of importance (expectations) in hotel services on performance (actual experience) within the context of budget hotels in China	questionnaire/ importance-performance analysis (IPA)
Firth & Hing (1999)	A/H	To investigate what types of eco-friendly practices are being implemented by the six backpacker hostels in Byron Bay; and to determine whether the implementation those practices influences backpackers' choice of accommodation	Interviews with hostel managers, questionnaires to customers/ Descriptive analysis
Murphy (2001)	A/H	to examine the nature of interactions among backpackers in an attempt to better understand their informal networks of information dissemination	Social situation analysis
Papis (2006)	A/H	to provide an insight into the importance of understanding the workforce as it affects and is affected by the internal and external environment	written questionnaires, documentation collection and observation of assistants in the hostel
Nash, Thyne & Davies (2006)	A/H	to gain a better understanding of the requirements of budget accommodation users in Scotland, the characteristics associated with their accommodation choice and the levels of importance and satisfaction associated with the main Scottish provider of budget accommodation (SYHA)	self-completion questionnaire and in depth-interviews with international and domestic visitors staying in SYHA hostels
Hecht & Martin (2006)	A/H	to better understand the characteristics of backpackers who stay at hostels in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Canada, and	interviews with experienced backpackers to address the questionnaire
Chitty, Ward & Chua (2007)	A/H	To determine which factors account for customer satisfaction with a service and their loyalty to a given service provider, in the particular, context of "backpacking" in Australia	Questionnaire applied to backpackers/ confirmatory factor analysis
Musa & Thirumoorthi (2011)	A/H	explores the reasons behind this phenomenal achievement by examining service quality and servicescape of the establishment	Website comments and in-depth interviews/ content analysis with Nvivo
Butler & Hannam (2013)	A/H	to shed further light onto the performances of other hostel-using groups which stay, and in many cases reside indefinitely, in hostels	Ethnographic approach – non-participant observation/ systematic lurking

Sun et al (2014)	A/H	To explore American university students' perceptions of youth hostels in China as a brand and their intention to use youth hostels, based on brand personality and self-congruity theories	focus group, experimental design, questionnaire applied to pre and post-test/ correlation, t-tests, frequencies and descriptives and ANOVA.
Brochado, Rita & Gameiro (2015)	A/H	to contribute to the understanding of backpacker's evaluation of service quality provided by hostels by developing a battery of items to assess perceptions of the overall hostel experience	Hostels reviews, in-depth interviews with hostel managers, focus group with guests, quantitative survey/ content analysis and EFA
Hory et al (2017)	A/H	to achieve a deeper understanding of the spatial issues related to backpacker tourism, a booming industry in Budapest	experimental design and architecture

Sector: CA - cultural attractions, E – Events, F&B - Food and Beverage, LA - Leisure Activities, T -Transport, A - Accommodation, A/H - Accommodation hostels

## Appendix 3 Sources of documental analysis – List of Brazilian web news

	<i>Title</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Date</i>
1.	Saiba quanto custa se hospedar nos melhores albergues do Brasil	UOL	15/02/2011
2.	Salvador tem albergue apontado como o melhor do Brasil	Correio da Bahia	26/03/2011
3.	Albergue é opção barata de investimento no setor hoteleiro	Terra Brasil	03/04/2012
4.	Hostels pode ser uma opção de intercâmbio cultural sem sair de São Paulo	ABN	08/05/2012
5.	Hostel carioca aposta na sustentabilidade	EXAME.com	02/07/2012
6.	Hostel Ondina Salvador com atendimento Gay Friendly	AthosGLS	17/08/2012
7.	Hostels de charme: Rio de Janeiro tem albergues-boutique com preços acessíveis e suítes modernas	Marie Claire	28/08/2012
8.	Guia Brasil 2013: .oztel, no Rio de Janeiro, é o albergue do ano	viajeaqui	28/10/2012
9.	Guest 607: nova hospedagem-boutique de São Paulo	viajeaqui	21/11/2012
10.	Luiz Fernando Guimarães abre hostel boutique em Salvador	viajeaqui	03/12/2012
11.	Invasão de turistas faz crescer número de albergues em São Paulo	Globo.com	25/02/2013
12.	Novos albergues se transformam em mais uma opção de lazer para os cariocas	O Dia Online	04/04/2013
13.	Novo hostel do Rio evoca design nacional	viajeaqui (Blogue)	10/04/2013
14.	'Mochileiros' largam emprego, ficam sócios e abrem hostel na Lapa, no Rio	Globo.com	14/05/2013
15.	Aracaju já conta com um Hostel na Orla de Atalaia	Infonet	24/05/2013
16.	Hostels viram 'negócio sério' e vão do Leblon à favela	veja.com	17/06/2013
17.	Em hostels: economia, amizades – e cuidado	veja.com	17/06/2013
18.	Concept design chega a foz do Iguaçu	H2FOZ	25/06/2013
19.	Site elege os 10 melhores hotéis no Brasil com diária menor que R\$ 100	Globo.com	16/08/2013
20.	Hostel é opção barata de hospedagem para o Rock in Rio	Catraca Livre	04/09/2013
21.	Hostel promove festa gratuita durante o verão	Catraca Livre	18/12/2013
22.	Hostels oferecem contato com natureza e cultura em Florianópolis	Globo.com	03/01/2014
23.	Mais caros, hostels ainda são opção mais econômica para o Carnaval	Terra Brasil	23/01/2014
24.	Hostel é opção barata de hospedagem na praia; veja melhores	Terra Brasil	30/01/2014
25.	Albergue do Rio é eleito o melhor da América Latina em 'Oscar' do setor	Globo.com	17/02/2014
26.	Hostels se queixam de concorrência desleal	Economia - iG	11/03/2014
27.	Kanye West quer construir hostel no Morro do Vidigal, no Rio de Janeiro	Purepeople.com.br	12/03/2014
28.	Hostel de Floripa é eleito o terceiro melhor da rede Hostelling International	Zero Hora	17/04/2014
29.	Novo conceito em albergue, Oka Brasil é inaugurado na Capital	A Crítica Campo Grande	08/05/2014
30.	com boa procura, hostels têm diárias até 5 vezes mais caras para Copa	Globo.com	05/06/2014
31.	Porto Tchê: bairrismo acolhedor envolve turistas na cultura gaúcha	Zero Hora	23/06/2014



32.	Eco Hostel: viajantes deixam sua marca rabiscada em portas e janelas	Zero Hora	23/06/2014
33.	Casa Azul: bom para se divertir, difícil de dormir	Zero Hora	24/06/2014
34.	Porto do Sol: invasão australiana reforça clima de casa de praia	Zero Hora	25/06/2014
35.	Bares de albergues são espaços perfeitos para confraternizar com os turistas	O Dia Online	26/06/2014
36.	Sete de 70 mil: argentinos invadem hostel da Vila Madalena	R7	28/06/2014
37.	Hospedagem alternativa atraiu 23,8% dos estrangeiros	Portal Brasil	29/07/2014
38.	Telstar Hostels promove festas especiais no final de semana	DCI	09/12/2014
39.	Procura por albergues para o Réveillon cresce mais do que por hotéis	O Dia Online	15/12/2014
40.	Hostels são opção mais barata de hospedagem para o fim de ano	Globo.com	30/12/2014
41.	Hostels e casas de família são opções mais baratas para turistas em Ubatuba	Globo.com	04/01/2015
42.	Albergues e hostels se espalham pelo país de olho nos turistas jovens	Globo.com	10/01/2015
43.	Hostels do Brasil são eleitos os melhores da América Latina	Globo.com	20/01/2015
44.	Hostel em Foz do Iguaçu (PR) é sinônimo de sustentabilidade	Portal Brasil	21/01/2015
45.	Hospedagem em hostel é opção para quem quer conhecer Florianópolis sem gastar muito	Notícias do Dia Online	22/01/2015
46.	Maioria dos hóspedes de albergues e pousadas no Rio é jovem e tem curso superior	EBC	13/02/2015
47.	Hostel concept: Uma escala de cores e design	Clickfoz	25/02/2015
48.	Hostel Bambu: Paz, amor e muitas festas na fronteira	Clickfoz	26/02/2015
49.	Hostel Katharina: de gringo para gringo	Clickfoz	27/02/2015
50.	Hostel tem décor cinco estrelas em São Paulo	Casa e Jardim	11/03/2015
51.	Operação da Ordem Pública fecha hostel irregular em Copacabana	Globo.com	12/03/2015
52.	Maior hostel container do mundo está no Brasil	Catraca Livre	14/03/2015
53.	Dez coisas que aprendi me hospedando em hostels	Catraca Livre	23/03/2015
54.	Hostels de SP estão com lotação máxima para o Lollapalooza	Globo.com	24/03/2015
55.	Boa Viagem ganha hostel design	NE10	25/03/2015
56.	Os hostels conquistaram São Paulo	Brasileiros	27/04/2015
57.	Em expansão	Brasileiros	28/04/2015
58.	Dólar atrai gringos	Brasileiros	29/04/2015
59.	Boa ocupação	Brasileiros	29/04/2015
60.	Azul Fusca é o primeiro hostel do Bairro do Recife	NE10	05/07/2015
61.	'Jazz no Hostel' serve guloseimas e boa música no We Hostel	Catraca Livre	17/07/2015
62.	Hostels fazem sucesso no Centro de Vitória unindo cultura e lazer	Globo.com	02/10/2015
63.	Hostel vingou ao abrir espaço para a cultura, as baladas e até casamentos	Campo Grande News	19/11/2015
64.	Tetris containêr é eleito um dos 10 hostels mais incríveis do país	Clickfoz	30/11/2015
65.	Hostels começam a conquistar turistas brasileiros	Revista Hoteis	07/12/2015

66.	Viajantes trocam trabalho por hospedagem	Jornal do Comércio	24/01/2016
67.	Hostel Che Lagarto, de Foz do Iguaçu, recebe prêmio mundial	Clickfoz	26/01/2016
68.	Hostels em favela estão lotados para o Carnaval	Brasil 247	02/02/2016
69.	Hostels se consolidam em São Paulo após sucesso na Copa do Mundo	Revista Hoteis	15/02/2016
70.	Refugiado sírio investe em São Paulo	Agência de Notícias Brasil-Árabe	21/02/2016
71.	Rede de Albergues HI Hostel ganha mais unidades pelo Brasil	Jornal O Globo	13/04/2016
72.	Turistas buscam albergues nas favelas para os jogos olímpicos no Rio	Brasileiros	25/04/2016
73.	10 hostels com belos designs para ficar no RJ nas Olimpíadas	EXAME.com	12/05/2016
74.	Hostels brasileiros apostam na tendência do turismo de experiência	Webventure	05/06/2016
75.	Hostels capricham na programação para atrair turistas durante Olimpíada	Jornal O Globo	09/06/2016
76.	Hostels em Niterói terão alvará provisório para Rio 2016	Jornal O Globo	10/06/2016
77.	Família faz sucesso com hostel na favela da Rocinha	EXAME.com	19/06/2016
78.	Concept Design hostel & Suites conquista certificado de Excelência do Tripadvisor	Revista Hoteis	22/06/2016
79.	Michael Jackson não morreu: Campinas tem primeiro hostel dedicado ao cantor	UOL	25/06/2016
80.	Primeiro hostel de Brasília	Jornal de Brasília	30/06/2016
81.	Hostels 'chiques' atraem nova clientela	Folha de S.Paulo	10/07/2016
82.	The Hostel inaugura a primeira unidade em Salvador	Jornal da Mídia	18/07/2016
83.	Grupo paulista inaugura hostel no Rio Vermelho	Correio da Bahia	22/07/2016
84.	Proximidade de locais dos Jogos e preços baixos atraem turistas para albergues da Zona Norte do Rio	Jornal O Globo	24/07/2016
85.	Franquia The Hostel registra crescimento de 300% em 3 anos	Revista Hoteis	02/08/2016
86.	Ocupação cresce cerca de 30% em hostels de SP em um ano	Globo.com	08/08/2016
87.	Hostels: veja opções de hospedagem barata no Recife e em Olinda	JC Online	08/08/2016
88.	Franquia de Hostel dribla crise, cresce e inaugura opção inédita de hospedagem em Salvador	Portal Nacional de Seguros	11/08/2016
89.	Trivago seleciona os dez melhores hostels do Brasil; veja	Mercado & Eventos	12/08/2016
90.	Hostel de São Paulo lança serviço de banho exclusivo para ciclistas	Terra Brasil	12/08/2016
91.	Hostel de padrão Europeu chega à Salvador; veja fotos	Mercado & Eventos	25/08/2016
92.	Único hostel boutique do Destino Iguaçu está entre os 10 melhores do Brasil	Paranashop	30/08/2016
93.	Região do Boulevard Olímpico (RJ) ganha novo hostel	Revista Hoteis	30/08/2016
94.	Hostel na Ilha de Deus atrai turistas estrangeiros	JC Online	04/09/2016

## Appendix 4 Sources of documental analysis: List of Portuguese web news

	<i>Title</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Date</i>
1.	Hostels dão cor à cidade	Jornal de Notícias	04/03/2011
2.	Só 10 dos 26 Hostels do Porto estão legalizados	Jornal de Notícias	25/03/2012
3.	Há 6 pedidos diários para abrir hostels no Porto, mas só há 10 legalizados	Porto24	25/03/2012
4.	Depois do "boom" na construção, hostels no Porto começam a ser postos à venda	Jornal de Notícias	06/08/2012
5.	A melhor vista do Porto...	Visão	20/11/2012
6.	Lisboa tem o hostel mais luxuoso da Europa	Expresso	25/01/2013
7.	Dormir com sardinhas, no primeiro hostel da Póvoa de Varzim	Visão	28/02/2013
8.	Hostels de Lisboa colocam Portugal no topo do ranking mundial	Jornal de Negócios	28/08/2013
9.	Porto, dos hostels aos hotéis de luxo	Público.pt	22/02/2014
10.	Pharmacy Hostel & Coffee Shop	Visão	13/05/2014
11.	Moon Hill Hostel	Visão	13/05/2014
12.	Hotelaria quer condicionar aluguer de casas a turistas à autorização do condomínio	Público.pt	24/05/2014
13.	Meio mundo diz que Portugal está na moda... e os turistas confirmam	Visão	28/05/2014
14.	Hostels vão ser incluídos pela primeira vez na lei do alojamento turístico	Público.pt	11/06/2014
15.	Cruz Vermelha lança Hostel para séniores em Gaia	Sapo	20/06/2014
16.	Há um buzz à volta do Porto	Público.pt	31/08/2014
17.	A turistificação de Lisboa e Porto ainda pode crescer	Público.pt	31/08/2014
18.	Maioria dos quartos dos hostels em Portugal deixam de poder ter menos de quatro camas	Dinheiro Vivo	12/09/2014
19.	Hostel 1878 recebe 30 jovens da geração Erasmus no Dia Mundial do Turismo	Sul Informacao	27/09/2014
20.	«Faro tem de acompanhar o "fenómeno hostel" na cidade»	Sul Informacao	24/11/2014
21.	Governo facilita arrendamento de casas a turistas	Jornal de Notícias	26/11/2014
22.	Câmara de Faro quer certificar hostels e pode apoiar vinda de "bloggers" à cidade	Sul Informacao	05/12/2014
23.	Microcrédito deu a mão aos novos empreendedores e está a arrebitar o comércio local	Público.pt	14/12/2014
24.	Uma antiga escola primária é hoje o Hostel Santa Maria	Revista Sábado	09/01/2015
25.	Portugal tem alguns dos melhores hostels do mundo	TVI24	20/01/2015
26.	Portugal tem dos melhores hostels do mundo	Jornal Digital	21/01/2015
27.	Nova lei reduz quartos duplos e individuais nos hostels	Dinheiro Vivo	08/02/2015
28.	Hostels em Portugal: novo regime aprovado pelo Governo não define tipologia de edifícios	idealista	09/02/2015
29.	Porto tem já 61 estabelecimentos de hospedagem registados	Notícias ao Minuto	08/03/2015
30.	A nova moda são os poshtels e há dois em Portugal	Notícias ao Minuto	12/03/2015
31.	Poshtels: a nova tendência no mercado de alojamento low-cost	Blasting News	16/03/2015
32.	Dois hostels portugueses entre os 10 mais luxuosos da Europa (em imagens)	TSF Online	26/03/2015
33.	Estará Portugal a ficar pequeno para tanto hotel?	Visão	17/04/2015
34.	Hostels: novas regras para implementar até 2020	TVI24	23/04/2015

35.	Mesquita Nunes: Novas regras "são as mínimas para hostels se diferenciarem de hotéis"	Dinheiro Vivo	24/04/2015
36.	Os mochileiros ricos que frequentam albergues com jacuzzis	EXAME.com	08/05/2015
37.	Hostel em São João do Estoril entre os dez mais atrativos na Europa	Notícias ao Minuto	02/07/2015
38.	Escola alentejana transformada em hostel	Espalha-Factos	27/07/2015
39.	Governo faz nova tentativa para concessionar 12 Pousadas da Juventude	Público.pt	18/08/2015
40.	Hostel com 120 camas vai nascer na Quinta da Pimenteira, em Monsanto	Público.pt	08/09/2015
41.	Legalidade de hostel em Monsanto questionada na Assembleia Municipal	Público.pt	15/09/2015
42.	O pior hostel do mundo abriu em Lisboa	Observador	23/09/2015
43.	Estudo: Alemães, norte-americanos e australianos são quem mais procuram Portugal	Diário Digital	03/11/2015
44.	Conheça os melhores hostels do mundo	Notícias ao Minuto	18/01/2016
45.	Salty Pelycan Beach Hostel & Surf Camp abre em Março em Cascais	Turisver	19/01/2016
46.	Três hostels do Porto entre os melhores do mundo	Porto24	20/01/2016
47.	Estação de Santa Apolónia vai ser um hostel	Expresso	27/01/2016
48.	Adeus estações, olá milhões!	Expresso	30/01/2016
49.	Batalha: Antiga escola primária dá lugar a hostel na Pia do Urso	Diário de Aveiro	08/03/2016
50.	Cinco hostels que sabem o que as mulheres gostam	Dinheiro Vivo	08/03/2016
51.	Empresa que arrematou antigo Hotel Netto quer iniciar obras em abril	Notícias ao Minuto	10/03/2016
52.	Há um hostel que vai revolucionar as artes em Lisboa	NiT	22/03/2016
53.	Arrábid-IN: o novo hostel num bairro típico de Setúbal	NiT	31/03/2016
54.	AlmaLusa: o novo boutique hotel do Chiado	NiT	01/04/2016
55.	Portugueses rendidos aos hostels	TVI24	02/04/2016
56.	Os 10 melhores boutique hotels de Portugal	NiT	21/04/2016
57.	David dos Santos abre as portas do Hostel Paradise, na Areia Branca: "O Oeste é muito mais forte que o Algarve"	Torres Vedras Web	05/05/2016
58.	O novo hostel de Óbidos é inspirado na natureza	NiT	06/05/2016
59.	Primeiro relatório mundial sobre tendência de hostel mostra que geração "Y" alimenta uma revolução no setor	EXAME.com	11/05/2016
60.	Ainda se diz, chique?	RTP	22/05/2016
61.	Batalha abre concurso para criação de hostel em antiga escola primária	Notícias ao Minuto	25/05/2016
62.	Há um novo hostel na cidade que tem um Samsung em vez de uma campanha	NiT	31/05/2016
63.	Grupo Hans Brinker renova hostel em Lisboa e admite mais investimentos em Portugal	presstur	01/06/2016
64.	Já pode dizer que tem casa no Gerês	Público.pt	07/06/2016
65.	Santa Maria da Feira vai ter dois hostels	Diário de Aveiro	23/06/2016
66.	Casas para turistas: alojamento local reúne quase metade das camas disponíveis em Portugal	idealista	27/06/2016

67.	Residência universitária vira "hostel" durante as férias para ser «chamariz» de alunos	Sul Informacao	03/07/2016
68.	O novo hostel de Leiria tem uma galeria dentro de casa	NiT	05/07/2016
69.	Nice Way Porto: há 170 camas novas em cima de um restaurante de kebabs	NiT	06/07/2016
70.	Verão: durma no novo hostel de Portimão por 20€	NiT	12/07/2016
71.	Açores já vão poder ter hostels	TVI24	04/08/2016
72.	Grupo Carrís Hoteles abre primeiro Bluesock Hostels na cidade do Porto	Hotelier News	22/08/2016
73.	O novo mundo dos 'hosteleiros'	Expresso	25/08/2016
74.	O Love Lisbon Hostel & Bar tem paredes pintadas à mão e um terraço	NiT	28/08/2016
75.	O primeiro hostel da LX Factory tem pranchas de skate e camas em cubículos	NiT	15/09/2016
76.	Em Lisboa há um novo hostel — e fica num palácio	NiT	22/09/2016
77.	Quem quer "viver num prédio com malas de rodinhas a entrar e a sair"?	TSF Online	27/09/2016
78.	Quem quer dormir nas caves Sandeman? Hostel e restaurante abrem em 2017	Observador	30/09/2016
79.	Estação de S. Bento com hostel	Jornal de Notícias	05/10/2016
80.	Os 10 "hostels" mais luxuosos da Europa. Um fica no Porto	Observador	11/10/2016
81.	Cá estamos nós outra vez nos tops dos hostels que valem a pena	Visão	12/10/2016

Appendix 5 Questionnaire applied to Brazilian and Portuguese hostels

## Pesquisa de caracterização dos hostels no Brasil

Você está colaborando com um estudo do doutorado em Turismo da Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal.

Tempo de preenchimento do questionário: 3 min

\* Required



Qual o nome do seu hostel? \*

Número total de quartos \*

Número total de camas \*

Tempo de existência do hostel \*

(Ex: 5 anos)

Preço médio em alta temporada \*

(Considerar preço dos quartos partilhados)

Preço médio em baixa temporada \*

(Considerar preço dos quartos partilhados)

**Preço médio em baixa temporada \***

(Considerar preço dos quartos partilhados)

## Perfil dos hóspedes

**Idade média dos hóspedes \***

- ☐ 18-24 anos
- ☐ 25-30 anos
- ☐ 31-40 anos
- ☐ +41 anos

**Relação entre turistas nacionais e estrangeiros \***

(Considerar um valor aproximado. Ex:80% estrangeiros)

**Principais mercados emissores estrangeiros \***

(Citar até os 5 mais importantes. Ex: Inglaterra, Alemanha, França, Brasil, Espanha)

## Obrigada!

Caso queira receber os resultados dessa pesquisa, deixe aqui um email para contacto:

Submit

## Pesquisa de caracterização dos hostels em Portugal

Você está a colaborar para um estudo do Doutorado em Turismo da Universidade de Aveiro.

Tempo de preenchimento do questionário: 3 min

\* Required



Qual o nome do seu hostel? \*

Número total de quartos \*

Número total de camas \*

Tempo de existência do hostel \*

(Ex: 5 anos)

Preço médio em alta temporada \*

(Considerar preço dos quartos partilhados)

Preço médio em baixa temporada \*

(Considerar preço dos quartos partilhados)

### Perfil dos hóspedes

Idade média dos hóspedes \*

- ☐ 18-24 anos
- ☐ 25-30 anos
- ☐ 31-40 anos
- ☐ +41 anos



**Relação entre turistas nacionais e estrangeiros \***

(Considerar um valor aproximado. Ex:80% estrangeiros)

**Principais mercados emissores estrangeiros \***

(Citar até os 5 mais importantes. Ex: Inglaterra, Alemanha, França, Brasil, Espanha)

**Obrigada!**

**Caso queira receber os resultados dessa pesquisa, deixe aqui um email para contacto:**

Submit

## Appendix 6 Questionnaire applied to travellers (Portuguese version)

**Comportamento de viagem e escolha de alojamento turístico**

Partilhe connosco os seus hábitos de viagem.

Este estudo realiza-se no âmbito do Programa Doutoral em Turismo da Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal.

No final da coleta de dados será sorteado um voucher de viagem. Participe!

**\* Required**

1. Caso queira concorrer a um voucher de viagem, deixe aqui seu e-mail:



**Partilhe um pouco sobre si:**

2. Descreva quatro palavras que definam a sua personalidade \*

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3. Eleja os interesses que mais combinam consigo (Selecione até 5 itens) \*

*Check all that apply.*

- ☐ Desporto
- ☐ Moda & Design
- ☐ Decoração & Bricolage
- ☐ Arte & Cultura
- ☐ Tecnologia & Games
- ☐ Viagens
- ☐ Gastronomia
- ☐ Serviço Social & Voluntariado
- ☐ Yoga & Meditação
- ☐ Meio ambiente & Natureza
- ☐ Fitness & Nutrição
- ☐ Vida noturna & Festivais
- ☐ Entretenimento (TV, séries, etc)
- ☐ Ciência
- ☐ Política
- ☐ Música

## O que caracteriza as suas motivações de viagem?

Considere 1 - discordo plenamente e 5 concordo plenamente

### Quando viajo busco...

4. **Ir a festas e festivais \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

5. **Vida noturna**  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

6. **Comer e beber \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

7. **Apreciar paisagens**  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

8. **Descansar \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

9. **Fugir do cotidiano \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

10. **Ver o máximo do destino**  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

11. **Experimentar a gastronomia local \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

12. **Aprender coisas novas \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

13. **Interagir com pessoas \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

14. **Visitar museus/monumentos \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

15. **Fazer novas amizades \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

16. **Trabalhar \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente



**Pense nas suas despesas quando viaja e responda:**

17. **Alojamento (hotéis, hostels, resorts...) \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Gasto pouco ou quase nada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gasto bastante

18. **Restauração e bebidas \***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Gasto pouco ou quase nada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gasto bastante

19. **Transportes \***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Gasto pouco ou quase nada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gasto bastante

20. **Agências de viagens e Operadores Turísticos \***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Gasto pouco ou quase nada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gasto bastante

21. **Serviços culturais \***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Gasto pouco ou quase nada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gasto bastante

22. **Recreação e Lazer \***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Gasto pouco ou quase nada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gasto bastante

23. **Outras atividades relacionadas \***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Gasto pouco ou quase nada	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Gasto bastante

24. **Quando viaja, geralmente qual o meio de hospedagem que escolhe? (Seleciona até 2 opções) \***

Check all that apply.

- ☐ hotel
- ☐ resort
- ☐ aluguer de apartamento ou moradia turística
- ☐ casa de familiares ou amigos
- ☐ hospedarias
- ☐ hostels
- ☐ parque de campismo e caravanismo

25. Já escolheu onde passar as próximas férias? Onde vai ficar hospedado? (Pode escolher até 2 opções) \*

Check all that apply.

- ☐ hotel  
☐ resort  
☐ aluguer de apartamentos ou moradia turística  
☐ casa de familiares ou amigos  
☐ hospedarias  
☐ hostels  
☐ parque de campismo e caravanismo

26. Quais as características que mais aprecia num alojamento? (Selecione o número que mais se aproxima da sua opinião) \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Instalações privadas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Instalações partilhadas

27. \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Ambiente calmo e relaxado	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Ambiente divertido e social

28. \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Só para passar a noite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Ofereça atividades para fazer ao longo do dia

29. \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Caseiro e acolhedor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Moderno e cool

30. \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Tratamento formal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Tratamento informal

31. \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Mais simples e mais barato	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Mais caro, mas que ofereça mais serviços

32. \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poucos recursos tecnológicos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Muitos recursos tecnológicos



### Agora, responda:

33. **Alguma vez já se hospedou num hostel? \***  
*Mark only one oval.*
- ☐ Sim *Skip to question 36.*
- ☐ Não *Skip to question 34.*
34. **Gostava de hospedar-se num hostel? \***  
*Mark only one oval.*
- ☐ Sim *After the last question in this section, skip to question 110.*
- ☐ Não *After the last question in this section, skip to question 111.*
35. **Se não, por quê?**
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
36. **Quantas vezes na vida (aproximadamente) já se hospedou em hostels?**  
*Mark only one oval.*
- ☐ 1 -3 vezes
- ☐ 4-10 vezes
- ☐ 11-20 vezes
- ☐ + de 20 vezes
37. **Geralmente hospeda-se em hostels quando viaja (Selecione todas as opções que se aplicam): \***  
*Check all that apply.*
- ☐ em família
- ☐ com companheiro (a)
- ☐ sozinho (a)
- ☐ com amigos
38. **Geralmente hospeda-se em hostels quando o destino é: \***  
*Mark only one oval.*
- ☐ no campo
- ☐ na praia
- ☐ na cidade

**Agora pense numa experiência positiva pela qual tenha passado ao hospedar-se num hostel e responda :**

Considere 1 discordo plenamente e 5 concordo plenamente



**Uma experiência positiva de estadia em hostel ...**

39. **Muda meu humor para melhor \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

40. **Faz-me sentir seguro(a) e confortável \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

41. **Faz-me sentir em casa \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

42. **Faz-me sentir divertido(a) e aventureiro(a) \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

43. **Faz-me sentir feliz \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

44. **Faz-me sentir relaxado(a) \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

**Quando escolho um hostel eu...**



## 45. Quero serviços rápidos e simples \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 46. Quero aprender com outros hóspedes \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 47. Gosto de saber que está tudo limpo \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 48. Gosto de ter certeza que tem um bom custo-benefício \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

## Num hostel gosto...

## 49. Que o ambiente tenha uma temperatura agradável \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 50. De ouvir uma boa música ambiente \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 51. De não ouvir barulho \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 52. Apreciar uma paisagem bonita \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 53. Quando o design e a decoração do ambiente mostram uma boa estética \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 54. De provar sabores locais \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

**Eu gosto quando num hostel eu...**

---

55. **Interajo com pessoas \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

56. **Partilho os espaços \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

57. **Faço novos amigos \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

58. **Partilho momentos com os novos amigos que faço \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

59. **Ouçó histórias de outros hóspedes \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

60. **Sinto-me parte da comunidade de viajantes \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

61. **Participo de atividades que promovam a interação (ex. rota dos bares, tours, jantares) \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

**Gosto quando o hostel tem uma atmosfera**

---

62. **De festa/diversão \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

63. **Calma \****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

64. **Confortável \****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

65. **Única e autêntica \****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

66. **Caseira e acolhedora \****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

67. **Amigável e social \****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

**Valorizo quando o hostel...**68. **É organizado \****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

69. **Tem todas as instalações limpas \****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

**Eu gosto quando os outros viajantes**70. **São amigáveis \****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

71. **Têm mente aberta \****Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

72. **São divertidos e gostam de festa \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

73. **São comunicativos e extrovertidos \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

74. **Partilham os mesmos interesses que eu \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

75. **São de diferentes nacionalidades \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

### Valorizo um hostel onde...

76. **O preço da diária é justo \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

77. **Os serviços adicionais têm um bom custo-benefício \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

78. **Alguns serviços vêm incluídos na diária (ex. pequeno-almoço, toalhas) \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

### Valorizo quando (n)o hostel...

79. **As instalações fazem-me sentir seguro(a) \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

80. **Proporciona segurança aos meus pertences (bagagens e objetos pessoais) \***  
*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

81. **Tem uma vizinhança segura \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

### Gosto quando o hostel...

---

82. **Oferece tours e rota dos bares \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

83. **Tem serviço de bar \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

84. **Tem o pequeno-almoço incluído \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

85. **Organiza eventos dentro das suas instalações \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

86. **Tem bom Wi-Fi \***

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 87. Oferece um check-in simples e rápido \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

**Gosto quando os funcionários do hostel...**

## 88.

## São gentis e acolhedores \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 89.

## São prestáveis e fazem o possível para resolver os meus problemas \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 90.

## Demonstram importar-se comigo \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 91.

## Tratam-me como amigo \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 92.

## São boa onda \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 93. São profissionais \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 94.

## Demonstram ter conhecimento e partilham informações importantes \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

**Valorizo quando o hostel...**

## 95.

## Tem uma arquitetura atrativa \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

96. **É bem planeado e desenhado \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

97. **É moderno \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

98. **A decoração interior é atrativa \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

99. **O design é aconchegante e acolhedor \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

### Valorizo quando o hostel...

100. **Oferece instalações (quartos, casa de banho, áreas comum) que são planeadas para serem funcionais \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

101. **Tem quartos confortáveis \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

102. **Oferece cozinha para que eu confecione as minhas próprias refeições \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

103. **Tem áreas comuns para que eu socialize com outros viajantes \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

104. **Tem casas de banho limpas \***  
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

### Gosto quando o hostel...

## 105. Tem um fácil acesso às principais atrações turísticas \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 106. Está perto de meios de transporte \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 107. Está próximo da vida noturna do local \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 108. Localiza-se numa boa vizinhança \*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
discordo plenamente	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	concordo plenamente

## 109. Algum outro aspeto a acrescentar:

---

## 110. Quais os principais motivos que o fazem/fariam escolher um hostel como meio de hospedagem? \*

Seleciona até 5 itens

Check all that apply.

- ☐ ambiente de interação
- ☐ instalações partilhadas
- ☐ preço
- ☐ ambiente jovem
- ☐ diversão
- ☐ tematização / hostel temático (cultura portuguesa, vinho, cinema, surf...)
- ☐ festas
- ☐ serviços incluídos
- ☐ ambiente informal
- ☐ conhecer pessoas
- ☐ ambiente multicultural
- ☐ praticidade e simplicidade dos serviços
- ☐ aprender com outros hóspedes
- ☐ Design inovador

Obrigada por chegar à etapa final. Ainda sobre si:





111. **Sexo \***  
*Mark only one oval.*
- ☐ Feminino
- ☐ Masculino

112. **Idade \***  
*Mark only one oval.*
- ☐ menos de 18
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-30
- ☐ 31-40
- ☐ +41

113. **Formação \***  
*Mark only one oval.*
- ☐ Ensino Básico
- ☐ Ensino Secundário
- ☐ Licenciatura
- ☐ Mestrado
- ☐ Doutoramento e/ou Pós Doc

114. **Área de formação**  
*Mark only one oval.*
- ☐ Ciências
- ☐ Engenharias
- ☐ Artes e Humanidades

115. **País de origem \***
- \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 7 Map of nodes generated with Nvivo 11

